



# UNIVERSIDAD DE LA RIOJA

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Improving Communicative Competence and Intercultural Competence through telecollaboration: Tandem via Skype

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**Trabajo de Fin de Máster**

# **Improving Communicative Competence and Intercultural Competence through telecollaboration: Tandem via Skype**

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# INDEX

<b>I. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
 <b>II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</b>	
1. GENERIC MODULE.....	2
1.1 <i>Sociedad, Familia y Educación.....</i>	<i>2</i>
1.2 <i>Procesos y Contextos Educativos.....</i>	<i>4</i>
1.3 <i>Aprendizaje y Desarrollo de la Personalidad.....</i>	<i>5</i>
2. SPECIFIC MODULE.....	7
2.1 <i>Complementos para la Formación Disciplinar.....</i>	<i>7</i>
2.2 <i>Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de la Lengua Extranjera (Inglés).....</i>	<i>8</i>
2.3 <i>Innovación Docente e Introducción a la Investigación Educativa.....</i>	<i>9</i>
3 CONCLUSION.....	10
4 REFERENCES.....	11
 <b>III. COURSE SYLLABUS</b>	
1. Introduction.....	13
2. Course objectives.....	13
3. Contents.....	15
4. Key competences.....	17
5. Methodology.....	18
6. Timing.....	19
7. Assessment criteria.....	20
8. Attention to diversity.....	21
9. Material and resources.....	22
10. Content Sequence.....	23
10.1 First term.....	23
10.2 Second term.....	28
10.2.1. Unit 6.....	29

10.3 Third term.....	49
11. REFERENCES.....	55

#### **IV. RESEARCH AND INNOVATIVE PROJECT**

1. INTRODUCTION.....	59
2. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	60
2.1 Culture and Intercultural Communicative Competence.....	60
2.2 From traditional learning theories to <i>Connectivism</i> .....	62
2.3 Communicative competence via telecollaboration: <i>Skype</i> .....	63
3. METHODOLOGY.....	67
3.1 Assessment in telecollaboration.....	69
3.2 Research questions.....	69
4. PARTICIPANTS.....	69
5. INSTRUMENTS.....	70
6. PROCEDURE.....	71
7. LIMITATIONS.....	72
8. EXPECTED RESULTS.....	73
9. CONCLUSION.....	74
10. REFERENCES.....	76
<b>V. APPENDIXES.....</b>	<b>80</b>

## I. INTRODUCTION

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*Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.*

(Nelson Mandela, 1918-2013)

The aim of this final project is to reflect all the knowledge and competences learnt throughout the *Máster de Profesorado de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria, Formación Profesional y Enseñanzas de Idiomas*, as well as to include an Innovative Project that deals with some skills and cultural awareness and a course syllabus related to the Innovative Project and the Spanish curriculum.

The present project is divided into three different parts which will be explained hereunder.

The first one consists of a theoretical framework based on the different subjects of the Master. These subjects are divided into two different modules: the generic module and the specific module. This theoretical framework is devoted to review the teaching-learning theories, as well as to reflect on the strategies and new resources for teaching English as a Second Language. Besides, the internship and the innovative project are also related to this part of the project since it is essential to relate theoretical knowledge to real implementation.

The second part consists of creating a course syllabus designed for 1<sup>st</sup> year of Secondary Education based on my internship in CPC Escuelas Pías. It includes all the objectives, contents, competences and strategies set in the *Real Decreto 19/2015*, dated on 12<sup>th</sup> June of La Rioja. The whole course syllabus consists of 15 teaching units which are related to cultural topics. Furthermore, this part also includes the development of a teaching unit in order to show the materials, the ideas and the new resources integrated to the syllabus.

Finally, the last part is devoted to the design of an innovative project. This part is aimed at emphasizing the relevance of enhancing intercultural communicative competence through new online tools like *Skype*. It is my intention within this project, not only to improve communicative competence by means of direct contact with the foreign language, but also to enhance the cultural awareness of the students.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

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The *Máster de Profesorado de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria, Formación Profesional y Enseñanzas de Idiomas* is formed by six subjects divided into two modules. The generic module involves the following subjects: *Sociedad Familia y Educación, Procesos y Contextos Educativos y Aprendizaje y Desarrollo de la Personalidad*, whereas the specific module, based on the teaching of English, includes the following ones: *Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de la Lengua Extranjera, Complementos para la Formación Disciplinar e Innovación Docente e Iniciación a la Investigación Educativa*.

The aim of this part is to explain the main concepts and ideas presented in the different subjects mentioned above. Since I consider really important to relate theoretical knowledge to real implementation, theory is presented taking into account my experience doing the *Practicum* of the master in the CPC Escuelas Pías. Furthermore, the Innovative Project proposed in this paper is related to some main concepts of each subject.

### 1. GENERIC MODULE

#### 1.1 *Sociedad, Familia y Educación*

This subject, commonly known as *Sociology*, has led me to realise that education as well as society is constantly changing. Thus, as future teachers, it is essential to be able to deal with the changes and challenges that education proposes.

As far as I am concerned, education is based on the educative institutions and this factor is of vital importance to manage the education system. However, thanks to this subject, I have realised that there are other meaningful aspects apart from educative institutions which contribute to educate children. These factors, related to the role played by society and by families, are essential in order to teach students.

On the one hand, the discussions carried out during this subject have allowed us to reflect about how education took place in a hierarchical and discriminatory society. Nevertheless, society, education and schools have evolved. The concept of *equality* has been integrated in our current education



from the perspective of diversity since the increase of immigration has led to the creation of multicultural classes. Thus, this diversity must be seen as an enrichment of the classroom environment and an enhancement for the development of intercultural competence. For example, it is my pleasure to say that during the internship I have noticed how this multiculturalism implies many cultural, cognitive and social benefits for the students. Unfortunately, it is important to add that many discriminatory problems in terms of gender and ethnicity still remain in our society, and these are affecting education in a bad way. Hence, there is too much work pending to change some people's perspectives with respect to the concept of *equality*.

On the other hand, this subject has led me to realise how the role of the families has an important influence in academic success. It is important to point out that current parents understand education in a different way in terms of attitudes. For instance, in the past teachers were right when they punished students by doing something wrong. However, nowadays students are increasingly protected by their parents when they have any problem at school for bad behaviour. Hence, teachers have to be careful with their comments and attitudes to students.

In spite of this fact, families are involved in a wide range of school activities. Moreover, they take part in students' integration and education since the education that students receive at home is later reflected in the academic process. During my *Practicum* I have seen that many families participate in the different activities organized by the school and the willingness they show to contribute to their children's education. Nonetheless, I have also noticed how students who belong to dysfunctional families are more prone to early school-leaving. Thus, as teachers, one of our functions is trying to compensate the instability the students may suffer at home.

Finally, it is interesting to highlight that as future teachers we have the power to change some situations. We should be able to solve the problems that education entails and we should always try to think in students' learning. Thus, for all of these reasons, the Innovative Project proposed is really interesting to develop the process of teaching-learning from a perspective based on an intercultural contact. The main goal of this project is not only related to the

improvement of communicative competence, but also with the learning of foreign cultures in order to make students aware of the cultural differences avoiding prejudices. They have to understand that multiculturalism provides educational, cultural and intellectual enrichment.

### **1.2 Procesos y Contextos Educativos**

This subject is also known as *Pedagogy* and it has been really useful during the *Practicum*. This subject has allowed me to understand the organization and structure of schools, as well as the general framework of the Spanish educational system. Thanks to the teacher and his book (Navaridas, 2013), several aspects related with the teaching programmes, the curriculum, the classroom management and some pedagogical methodologies have been acquired. All of these aspects have been especially useful to develop along the internship and the subsequent *Memoria de Prácticas*.

As future teachers, this subject results very interesting since we must know the school's operation such as the PEC, the internal regulations, the course syllabus and the didactics units to be able to manage a classroom.

Thanks to *Procesos y Contextos Educativos*, it has been noticed that teaching-learning process is really complex and teachers require some specific competences and personal skills to be a good teacher. The first thing is to have mutual respect between teacher and student. Besides, teachers need to nurture their student's confidence and motivation. (Díaz-Aguado, 2006).

Navaridas (2013) has tried to show us how to be a good teacher, and it was quite motivating because we raised questions such as: Who is considered to be a good teacher?, the one who knows about the subject? or the one who knows how to transmit his knowledge to the students?. All of these questions made me rethink about the techniques and the competences I needed to become a good teacher. In my opinion, this "rethinking" makes me look for these qualities I may lack and try to improve them to transmit the knowledge to the students in a right way.

Henceforth, it would be interesting to stress the concept of *empowerment* that we discussed during this subject in order to relate it to my Innovative Project. Navaridas (2013) states that students can become competent people

taking into account the concept of *empowerment*. They should be able to get their own goals and dreams if we encourage them to do it. The main aspect we have to master is how to motivate students to enrich their knowledge without forcing them to do it. Thus, I believe that the idea of communicating with people from other countries via *Skype* is quite motivating for students. It is true that this implementation will require several adjustments in the curriculum in terms of objectives, contents and standards, but this activity could let them be competent in the future because they will work with native speakers in order to be prepared for future real-life situations.

### **1.3 Aprendizaje y Desarrollo de la Personalidad**

This subject commonly known as *Psychology* aims to train future teachers for secondary education, baccalaureate, vocational training and language teaching. This subject helps us to become familiar with our students and to be able to gain a much better understanding of the daily reality of the classroom.

Adolescence (from 11 to 19 years approximately) is a hard biological, psychological, social and sexual stage with constant changes in terms of physical, psychological and personal development. Thus, it is essential to be aware of all these changes because they determine students' behaviour and learning processes.

Within this subject it would be interesting to highlight the intrapersonal factors which are related directly with the students' attitude. Intrapersonal factors include attention, memory, motivation and learning and cognitive styles. All of these aspects are included in the teaching-learning process, so it is important to take them in mind before giving a class. According to Ausubel (1978), all these factors should be put together in order to get students involved in the class, and I totally agree with him. It is related to the Ausubel's theory of meaningful learning, which states that learners acquire knowledge when they are able to related previous concepts with new concepts.

Among all these factors, *motivation* plays an essential role in students' learning process. Learning achievement is related not only with the capacity or students' knowledge, but also with their aptitude for learning. There are some general theories about motivation, but we will point out the *Maslow's Hierarchy*

of Needs (Maslow, 1943), which is a motivational theory in psychology comprising a five tier model of human needs, often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid. According to Maslow's theory, "there are four types of needs that must be satisfied before a person can act unselfishly and these needs are arranged in a hierarchical order" (Griffin, 1991, p. 125).

In relation to the Innovative Project proposed in this document, it is considered that motivation must always be presented in the teaching process, because this factor implies that students' attention and memory are also involved in the teaching-learning process.

Furthermore, in relation to the Innovative Project it is essential to stress a theory of psychological development related to the Vygotskian social constructivism. This is the most appropriate model, which states that humans' generation knowledge stems from social interaction and context (Vygotski, 1978). From my point of view, students' knowledge can improve by means of social interaction. Thus, the use of *Skype* as the main tool to communicate in a foreign language seems to me one of the best ways to increase knowledge.

Moreover, another Vygotskian theory is the so-called theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and Scaffolding, based on the students' learning process. It focuses on collaborative work which is another way of social interaction.

On the one hand, the ZPD is "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance" (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86), that is to say, the distance between "what a learner can do without help and what he or she can do with help" (Hummel, 2014 p.91).

On the other hand, scaffolding is "the role played by teachers, peers, and others in supporting the learner's development to get to a more advanced stage" (Hummel, 2014, p. 92).

Hence, these concepts are directly related to the Innovative Project since students are guided by the teachers in order to communicate with their foreign partners. Firstly, students will receive instructions to complete the tasks, but at

the end of the course they will have the autonomy to speak without guidance from the teacher.

## **2. SPECIFIC MODULE**

Within the specific module, there are three different subjects which are explained in order to relate them to the Innovative Project developed at the end of this document.

### ***2.1 Complementos para la Formación Disciplinar***

This subject aimed at providing us with knowledge on typology of methods in ELT history. First of all, we realised that there are some aspects related with the gender, age, aptitude and cognitive factors that influence in language acquisition. Along the subject, we have studied the different perspectives of first and second language acquisition such as *behaviourism* that is related to specific behaviours acquired in response to specific stimuli. “Correct responses are reinforced and increase the chance of the behavior becoming learned” Skinner, 1957 (cited in Richards and Rogers, 2014, p.26). Other perspective is the *innatism* with Noam Chomsky as the most influential figure. This linguist suggests the hypothesis that all human language is based on some innate universal principles (*Universal Grammar*). Piaget and Vygotsky developed *the interactional and developmental perspective*. These authors observed infants and children in their play and in their interaction with objects and people and realised that environment is one of the most important features to explain the acquisition of languages according to these authors. They believe that interactions among children and also between children and adults are really useful to improve level of knowledge and performance. Piaget (cited in Lightbown and Spada, 2013).

In relation to these two last authors, it would be interesting to make special emphasis on how social interaction influences in the acquisition of a foreign language. Our Innovative Project, based on the improvement of communicative competence by using *Skype* as the main tool, tries to demonstrate that interaction with the physical world is quite important to language acquisition.

Other aspect to highlight within this subject is the history of English language teaching methodology. We can consider the different theories of language

teaching from three different perspectives: *linguistic*, which is based on the form (Grammar-Translation Method, Direct Method and Audiolingual Method); *humanistic*, which aims at developing human values, self-awareness and empathy (The Silent Way, Total Physical Response, Suggestopedia and Community language learning) and *communicative*, which is based on the desire to communicate in authentic contexts (Natural Approach, Communicative Approach, Task-Based Approach and CLIL). It is important to say that the Communicative Approach is the most used by teachers of English as a Foreign Language. This method makes use of contextualized real-life situations that require communication. It states that mastery of grammar is important but only as a means to gain successful communication. (Sánchez-Reyes, 2011).

Many approaches and methods have existed throughout history, but in my opinion there is no method better than other since some aspects from each one are useful to teach a foreign language. During my *Practicum* I have noticed that communication is one of the skills which implies more difficulties among students. Thus, it would be interesting and rewarding for learners to bring them closer to the foreign language by means of direct contact with native speakers.

## **2.2 Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de la Lengua Extranjera (Inglés)**

This subject has lasted for the whole academic year and we could say that it has been divided into three different parts.

The first part of the subject involved the foreign language curriculum based on the Spanish educational system: Spanish Law, its legislation, the key competences and contents.

The second part, and the most relevant one to the Innovative Project, was designed to familiarize us with the implementation of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) in foreign language syllabus design, its teaching and assessment. According to Byram's model (1997), "Intercultural Competence (IC) refers to the ability to meet people and engage successfully with people for another social group" (Byram, 1997, p.38). Besides, he adds that language comprehension needs not only IC but also language competence since the relationship between language and culture is crucial.

Thus, our role as foreign language teachers is not only to transfer knowledge on linguistic aspects, but also to show the cultural differences of the societies around the world. The aim of the Innovative Project proposed here is to try not only to improve the communicative competence, but also to enhance intercultural competence in class. We would try to motivate students in their desire to communicate in authentic ways about meaningful topics.

Lastly, the third part of this subject was devised to enable us to be aware of the most recent techniques and resources (ICT) in foreign language teaching as well as enhancing CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). Before focusing on CLIL, we were provided with the various types of syllabi that have been developed within the Communicative Approach, Content and Language Integrated Learning, and online tools that promote the development of the four skills (reading, listening, writing and speaking).

During the last months of this subject we had to design a syllabus based on CLIL method. Besides, to do this project we were provided with different educational resources such as *Powtoon*, *Inklewriter*, *Kahoot*, *Newsela*, among others which led us to keep up with the times.

### **2.3 Innovación docente e introducción a la investigación educativa (Inglés)**

This is the last subject of the specific module and it aimed at providing us with the necessary information and tools for the development of our Innovation Project in this document. Thus, this subject is directly related with the project.

The first part of the subject was devised in order to let us acquire some knowledge about how to do research. Our major task was to design a research project, which set the grounds for the Innovation Project that we developed at the end of this subject. Then, we read some chapters about types of research and several theoretical notions about how to conduct our research as future teachers. Thanks to these texts which belonged to Bell (2006), we have learned how to organise the different sections for our research papers. Besides, these texts have been really useful for providing us with some tips about how to start a research for the first time.

In the second part of the subject, we were provided with more information about innovative tools to apply in our teaching practice. We had to create an innovative tool in groups that could be useful for our future classrooms.

To conclude, it is important to state that all of these texts, theoretical notions and examples of researches and innovative tools have helped us to develop and think about our Innovative Project.

### **3. Conclusion**

To sum up, it would be vital to emphasize the essential role of the *Practicum* at CPC Escuelas Pías that let me put into practice effectively all the knowledge acquired during the *Máster*. It is important to say that this period of training has encouraged me to make further improvements as a future teacher.

The different subjects of this *Máster* give us a glimpse of the different aspects of being a teacher and the changes that sometimes are needed to teach a foreign language. Moreover, I have been able to put into practice not only some pedagogical techniques, but also to make use of some of those materials and resources recommended for English teaching. The different subjects have made me aware of the difficulties for teaching English and the adjustments required in order to teach it. Thanks to the theoretical framework provided during the different subjects and the experience acquired during the *Practicum* I have been able to realise what actually occurs in real life when a foreign language is taught.



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### III. COURSE SYLLABUS

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#### 1. Introduction

The following syllabus has been designed for 1<sup>st</sup> year of ESO (*Educación Secundaria Obligatoria*) students. At this level, students have not studied all the grammatical content yet, but they will be taught new content, vocabulary, phonology and different functions of the language. Furthermore, students will develop receptive and productive skills through series of tasks and activities specially prepared to motivate them. It is also essential to highlight that socio-cultural aspects and intercultural awareness play an important role in this syllabus. Every unit focuses on a cultural aspect, which will be worked by speaking with native students and during the classes. One of the main objectives to reach with this syllabus is to increase students' knowledge of groups culturally different from them. During the whole year they will have the chance to reflect on their own culture, as well as try to understand cultural differences from other perspectives.

Thus, this program offers the opportunity to get students involved in their own learning process and keep in touch with people from other country to enhance their cultural knowledge, as well as to improve their communicative competence.

#### 2. Course objectives

According to the *Real Decreto 19/2015* dated on 12<sup>th</sup> June and taking into account Article 2, the Secondary School aim is:

*1. Transmitir a los alumnos los elementos esenciales de la cultura, especialmente en sus aspectos humanístico, artístico, científico y tecnológico; desarrollar y afianzar en ellos hábitos de estudio y de trabajo que les permitan aprender por sí mismos; favorecer el trabajo en equipo; formarlos para que asuman sus deberes y ejerzan sus derechos como ciudadanos responsables; y prepararlos, con las debidas garantías, para su incorporación a Estudios posteriores y para su inserción laboral.*

Moreover, within the objectives of the Secondary School, the Article 3 establishes that students should be able to:

*a) Asumir responsablemente sus deberes, conocer y ejercer sus derechos en el respeto a los demás, practicar la tolerancia, la cooperación y la solidaridad entre las personas y grupos, ejercitarse en el diálogo afianzando los derechos humanos y la igualdad de trato y de oportunidades entre mujeres y hombres, como valores comunes de una sociedad plural y prepararse para el ejercicio de la ciudadanía democrática.*

*b) Desarrollar y consolidar hábitos de disciplina, estudio y trabajo individual y en equipo como condición necesaria para una realización eficaz de las tareas del aprendizaje y como medio de desarrollo personal.*

*c) Valorar y respetar la diferencia de sexos y la igualdad de derechos y oportunidades entre ellos. Rechazar la discriminación de las personas por razón de sexo o por cualquier otra condición o circunstancia personal o social. Rechazar los estereotipos que supongan discriminación entre hombres y mujeres, así como cualquier manifestación de violencia contra la mujer.*

*d) Fortalecer sus capacidades afectivas en todos los ámbitos de la personalidad y en sus relaciones con los demás, así como rechazar la violencia, los prejuicios de cualquier tipo, los comportamientos sexistas y resolver pacíficamente los conflictos.*

*e) Desarrollar destrezas básicas en la utilización de las fuentes de información para, con sentido crítico, adquirir nuevos conocimientos. Adquirir una preparación básica en el campo de las tecnologías, especialmente las de la información y la comunicación.*

*f) Concebir el conocimiento científico como un saber integrado, que se estructura en distintas disciplinas, así como conocer y aplicar los métodos para identificar los problemas en los diversos campos del conocimiento y de la experiencia.*

*g) Desarrollar el espíritu emprendedor y la confianza en sí mismo, la participación, el sentido crítico, la iniciativa personal y la capacidad para aprender a aprender, planificar, tomar decisiones y asumir responsabilidades.*

*h) Comprender y expresar con corrección, oralmente y por escrito, en la lengua castellana y, si la hubiere, en la lengua cooficial de la Comunidad Autónoma,*

*textos y mensajes complejos, e iniciarse en el conocimiento, la lectura y el estudio de la literatura.*

*i) Comprender y expresarse en una o más lenguas extranjeras de manera apropiada.*

*j) Conocer, valorar y respetar los aspectos básicos de la cultura y la historia propias y de los demás, así como el patrimonio artístico y cultural.*

*k) Conocer y aceptar el funcionamiento del propio cuerpo y el de los otros, respetar las diferencias, afianzar los hábitos de cuidado y salud corporales e incorporar la educación física y la práctica del deporte para favorecer el desarrollo personal y social. Conocer y valorar la dimensión humana de la sexualidad en toda su diversidad. Valorar críticamente los hábitos sociales relacionados con la salud, el consumo, el cuidado de los seres vivos y el medio ambiente, contribuyendo a su conservación y mejora.*

*l) Apreciar la creación artística y comprender el lenguaje de las distintas manifestaciones artísticas, utilizando diversos medios de expresión y representación.*

### **3. Contents**

The contents in *Decreto 19/2015* dated on 12<sup>th</sup> June are presented in four different blocks regarding the main skills that contribute to the achievement of the course objectives and competences.

#### **Block 1 and 3. Listening Comprehension and Reading comprehension**

- *Movilización de información previa sobre tipo de tarea y tema.*
- *Identificación del tipo textual, adaptando la comprensión al mismo.*
- *Distinción de tipos de comprensión (sentido general, información esencial, puntos principales, detalles relevantes).*
- *Formulación de hipótesis sobre contenido y contexto.*
- *Inferencia y formulación de hipótesis sobre significados a partir de la comprensión de elementos significativos, lingüísticos y paralingüísticos.*
- *Reformulación de hipótesis a partir de la comprensión de nuevos elementos.*

- Aspectos socioculturales y sociolingüísticos: convenciones sociales, normas de cortesía y registros; costumbres y valores; lenguaje no verbal.

## **Block 2. Spoken production and spoken interaction**

- *Concebir el mensaje con claridad, distinguiendo su idea o ideas principales y su estructura básica.*
- *Adecuar el texto al destinatario, contexto y canal, aplicando el registro y la estructura de discurso adecuados a cada caso.*
- *Expresar el mensaje con claridad, coherencia, estructurándolo adecuadamente y ajustándose, en su caso, a los modelos y fórmulas de cada tipo de texto.*
- *Reajustar la tarea (emprender una versión más modesta de la tarea) o el mensaje (hacer concesiones en lo que realmente le gustaría expresar), tras valorar las dificultades y los recursos disponibles.*
- *Apoyarse en y sacar el máximo partido de los conocimientos previos (utilizar lenguaje 'prefabricado', etc.).*
- *Compensar las carencias lingüísticas mediante procedimientos lingüísticos, paralingüísticos o paratextuales.*

## **Block 4. Written expression: production and interaction**

- *Movilizar y coordinar las propias competencias generales y comunicativas con el fin de realizar eficazmente la tarea (repasar qué se sabe sobre el tema, qué se puede o se quiere decir, etc.).*
- *Localizar y usar adecuadamente recursos lingüísticos o temáticos (uso de un diccionario o gramática, obtención de ayuda, etc.).*
- *Expresar el mensaje con claridad ajustándose a los modelos y fórmulas de cada tipo de texto.*
- *Reajustar la tarea (emprender una versión más modesta de la tarea) o el mensaje (hacer concesiones en lo que realmente le gustaría expresar), tras valorar las dificultades y los recursos disponibles.*
- *Apoyarse en y sacar el máximo partido de los conocimientos previos (utilizar lenguaje 'prefabricado', etc.).*

- *Aspectos socioculturales y sociolingüísticos: convenciones sociales, normas de cortesía y registros; costumbres y valores; lenguaje no verbal.*

#### **4. Key Competences**

As established by the *Decreto 19/2015* dated on 12<sup>th</sup> June the key competences are the basic competences that students must acquire during the compulsory education to integrate knowledge, skills and attitudes in a practical way to solve problems and react appropriately in a variety of contexts and situations. These competences are included in the curriculum and are considered to be of vital importance.

Thus, students should be able to develop the following competences in the Foreign Language classroom:

- Competence in linguistic communication (LC): The ability to express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and to interact linguistically in an appropriate and creative way in a full range of societal and cultural contexts.
- Mathematical competence (MC): The ability to develop and apply mathematical thinking in order to solve a range of problems in everyday situations.
- Digital competence in processing information and use of ICT (ICT): It involves the confident and critical use of information society technology (IST) and thus basic skills in information and communication technology (ICT).
- Learning to learn (LL): The ability to pursue and organise one's own learning, either individually or in groups, in accordance with one's own needs, and awareness of methods and opportunities.
- Social and civic competences (SCC): Social competence refers to personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life.

f. Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship (SIE): The ability to turn ideas into action. It involves creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives.

g. Cultural awareness and expression (CA): It involves appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media (music, performing arts, literature and the visual arts).

## **5. Methodology**

First of all, *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)* is the main approach that takes part in the learning process of students within this syllabus. Thanks to the interaction with their native partner and the different spoken tasks purposed in class, students will improve their communicative competence, which is the principle aim of this syllabus. They will be able to understand the cultural differences between countries dealing with real-life situations. Moreover, *Focus on Form* will be used to explain the grammar contents of the units. Besides, it is essential to master grammar structures for communication to be successful.

Secondly, there are 15 units within this syllabus and they are organized to cover the contents of a whole course. At this stage, students have four hours of English as a Second Language per week and every unit has been designed to cover 8 sessions approximately. However, we will have one or two more hours to do the exams of the unit. Furthermore, we have to take into consideration that it is impossible to predict the setbacks that can arise, so depending on the unit we will need more or less sessions.

We have divided the units into 15 because we have chosen five different units for each term. The different units are focused on different grammar structures and vocabulary. Besides, we have divided the tasks into four different skills (writing, listening, reading and speaking). The topics treated in the different units are related to cultural aspects of the students' country and other countries in order to see the cultural differences between people. Moreover, they have to practice and to improve their communicative competence by doing *Skype* with a native partner one hour per week. They will be provided with different activities, topics and handouts to be able to have a conversation.



Other interesting thing is that during the third term they will work in a project with their native partner that they will present at the end of the unit. The topics are related to the five continents and in each unit, they will adopt the role of an investigator to discover interesting things about the different continents. Along this project they will have to put into practice the grammar structures and vocabulary learnt during the whole year. Moreover, they are free to choose the topic they are interested in, provided that it is related with the continent.

The teacher will provide them with different resources useful to do the project. However, they are allowed to use other materials to do their projects. At the end of the unit they will have to present their works in front of the class and the will be assessed by means of a rubric. Therefore, during the last term students will spend two hours per week doing *Skype* with their native partner to be able to work in the project together. We will spend the rest of the hours doing some listening or reading curiosities about the continent we are talking about in order to give some ideas for the project.

## 6. Timing

TERM	UNITS	SESSIONS PER UNIT	SESSIONS PER TERM
<b>FIRST</b>	1. <i>Come Back to school</i>	8	45 (40 for teaching + 5 for assessment)
	2. <i>May daily routine</i>	8	
	3. <i>Welcome to London</i>	8	
	4. <i>We love sports!</i>	8	
	5. <i>Do you believe in magic?</i>	8	
<b>SECOND</b>	6. <i>Street life</i>	8	45 (40 for teaching + 5 for assessment)
	7. <i>Love is all you need!</i>	8	
	8. <i>Carnival, carnival!</i>	8	
	9. <i>Easter</i>	8	
	10. <i>Are you scared of the future?</i>	8	
<b>THIRD</b>	11. <i>Europe</i>	6	35 (30 for teaching and doing the projects + 5 for assessment)
	12. <i>Africa</i>	6	
	13. <i>America</i>	6	
	14. <i>Asia</i>	6	
	15. <i>Oceania</i>	6	

**SESSIONS PER ACADEMIC YEAR: 125**

## 7. Assessment criteria

According to *Decreto 19/2015* dated on 12<sup>th</sup> June and which establishes the curriculum of Secondary School in La Rioja, students in 1<sup>st</sup> year of ESO should be able to understand and use the following points of the foreign language listed below:

*a) Identificar la información esencial, los puntos principales y los detalles más relevantes en textos orales breves y sencillos en lengua estándar, bien estructurados, con predominio de estructuras simples y léxico de uso frecuente, transmitidos de viva voz o por medios técnicos y articulados con claridad a velocidad lenta o media y que versen sobre asuntos cotidianos en situaciones habituales o sobre temas generales relacionados con las propias experiencias e intereses en los ámbitos personal, público y educativo, siempre que las condiciones acústicas no distorsionen el mensaje, se pueda volver a escuchar lo dicho o pedir confirmación y se cuente con una clara referencia contextual.*

*b) Conocer y saber aplicar las estrategias más adecuadas para la comprensión del sentido general, la información esencial, los puntos e ideas principales y los detalles más relevantes del texto.*

*c) Conocer y utilizar para la comprensión del texto los aspectos socioculturales y sociolingüísticos relativos a la vida cotidiana (hábitos de estudio y de trabajo, actividades de ocio), condiciones de vida (entorno, estructura social), relaciones interpersonales (entre hombres y mujeres, en el centro educativo), comportamiento (gestos, expresiones faciales, uso de la voz), y convenciones sociales (fórmulas de cortesía y tratamiento).*

*d) Distinguir la función o funciones comunicativas más relevantes del texto y un repertorio limitado de sus exponentes más frecuentes, así como patrones discursivos básicos relativos a la organización textual.*

*e) Aplicar a la comprensión del texto los conocimientos sobre los constituyentes y la organización de patrones sintácticos de uso frecuente en la comunicación oral.*

*f) Reconocer léxico oral de uso frecuente relativo a asuntos cotidianos o relacionados con los propios intereses y estudios, e inferir del contexto y del*

*contexto, con apoyo visual, los significados de palabras y expresiones que se desconocen.*

*g) Discriminar patrones sonoros, acentuales, rítmicos y de entonación de uso frecuente, y reconocer los significados e intenciones comunicativas generales relacionados con los mismos.*

This syllabus aims at providing students with both, formative and summative assessment. For the formative assessment teacher will use rubrics to write comments and to give detailed feedback in order to help students correct their mistakes and improve the different skills. Rubrics will be used above all for spoken and written production and interaction. As for summative assessment, students will do different exams of the different units and they will receive a grade per term based on their performance on reading, listening, writing and speaking.

Thus, students receive a grade over 25% for each skill (reading, listening, writing and speaking). Nevertheless, in the last term we will give more importance to spoken production since they will work with their native partner during the whole term and they will present a final project at the end of each unit. Then, spoken production will represent the 40% of the final grade within the units 10, 11, 12, 13 and 15. The written production will be the 30% since they will also have to hand the project in writing. Lastly, listening and reading will represent the 30% (15% each one) by taking into consideration some activities carried out in class.

To sum up, it is vital to highlight that at the end of the course students will make a final exam, which will include the vocabulary and the grammar learnt along the whole year, listening and reading, and a final spoken production (monologue) talking about their native partners, their hobbies, their daily routine, traditions, etc.

## **8. Attention to diversity**

Teaching English as a Second Language must be individual and adapted to every student's needs. Besides, this subject offers many opportunities and resources in order to support individual learning if it is required.

As future teachers we can face many different situations to learn how to deal with them in a right way. For instance, teachers will have students with special needs in terms of learning pace and they should adapt the activities to the individual learning needs. Besides, teachers will face students who belong to dysfunctional families and are more prone to disturb or annoy the rest of the class. These students are less motivated to learn and teacher has to be able to help them to change their attitudes.

From my point of view, this syllabus has been created to be a strong motivator for students diagnosed with ADHD since there is a lot of interaction among students. Moreover, there is a wide combination of activities which enable students to increase their motivation and to improve their weaknesses.

In addition, due to the fact that the textbook is only a support material, teacher can provide extra work for students that require special attention in order to help them to understand the concepts. Besides, depending on students' interest, teacher is able to provide them with exercises, videos and more activities that motivate them for further learning.

## **9. Material and resources**

*Spectrum 1* is the textbook used to organize the grammar contents and to practise grammar exercises during the whole year. However, this textbook is only an additional resource, because the topics do not correspond to it.

Moreover, students will be provided with extra material in terms of reading, listening and speaking activities in order to practise the four skills. Some resources and tools from the Internet will be also used to practise the skills and to foster students' curiosity and interaction. Besides, different videos and games are used in this unit. Interactive whiteboard and computer room are required to do different tasks related to spoken production and interaction such as the conversations via *Skype* with their native partners and the presentations of projects at the end of the some units.

## 10. Content Sequence

### 10.1 FIRST TERM

UNIT 1: COME BACK TO SCHOOL			FIRST TERM	SESSIONS: 8
<b>Introduction</b>  This unit aims at being used as an introduction to the new school year. It consists of reviewing the most important aspects of English that students should know at this point. It serves for refreshing their background knowledge before starting the new course.				
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand the use of the <i>Possessive adjectives</i>.</li><li>- Understand and practice the use of the <i>Have got</i>.</li><li>- Understand the use of the <i>Demonstrative pronouns</i>.</li><li>- Be able to understand the differences between a subject and an object.</li><li>- Understand and practice the use of <i>Imperative</i>.</li><li>- Learn vocabulary related with classroom objects and school subjects.</li><li>- Review the plurals formation.</li><li>- Understand and practice the use of <i>Prepositions of places</i>.</li></ul>			<b>Competences</b>  LC  ICT  SCC  CA	
<b>CONTENTS →</b>				
<b>BLOCK 1: Listening comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Listening about a day at school.</li><li>- Listening a conversation between students from different countries.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 2: Spoken production and spoken interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Meet your native partner via <i>Skype</i>. Introduce yourself.</li><li>- Speak in class about your favourite subjects and things at school.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 3: Reading comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reading a text about the different forms of education in different countries.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 4: Written expression: production and interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Writing a summary about the first month at school.</li></ul>	
<b>Methodology:</b> Communicative Language Teaching				
<b>Materials and resources:</b> Textbook, Workbook, Computer, Skype, Interactive book, Handouts.				
<b>Assessment:</b> Individual work + Exam of the Unit				

UNIT 2: MY DAILY ROUTINE			FIRST TERM	SESSIONS: 8
<b>Introduction</b> This unit aims at being used as a review of previous contents of English language to talk about the current times. It is focused on the daily routine, family and lifestyle.				
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand and practice the use of the <i>Present Simple</i> in affirmative, negative and questions.</li><li>- Understand the use of <i>quantifiers</i>.</li><li>- Understand and practice the use of <i>there is, there are, a, an, some</i> and <i>any</i>.</li><li>- Be able to understand the differences between the lifestyles depending on the country.</li><li>- Learn vocabulary related with family, house and pets.</li></ul>			<b>Competences</b>  LC  ICT  SCC  CA	
<b>CONTENTS →</b>				
<b>BLOCK 1: Listening comprehension</b> -Video about a day in a life of a British teenager.  -Listen a conversation between members of a family.	<b>BLOCK 2: Spoken production and spoken interaction</b>  - Talk about your daily routine with your native partner via <i>Skype</i> .  - Speak in class about your favourite subjects and things at school.	<b>BLOCK 3: Reading comprehension</b>  -Read a text about the most common pets in United Kingdom.	<b>BLOCK 4: Written expression: production and interaction</b>  -Write an essay about the daily routine.	
<b>Methodology:</b> Communicative Language Teaching				
<b>Materials and resources:</b> Textbook, Workbook, Computer, Skype, Interactive book, Handouts.				
<b>Assessment:</b> Individual work + Exam of the Unit				

UNIT 3: WELCOME TO LONDON!		FIRST TERM	SESSIONS: 8
<b>Introduction</b>  This unit aims at bringing students closer to the real-life in a big city such as London. The goal is to make comparisons between their cities or villages and big cities.			
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand and practice the use of <i>Comparative and superlative adjectives</i>.</li><li>- Use correctly the <i>Present Simple</i>.</li><li>- Understand and use correctly vocabulary related to adjectives.</li><li>- Understand and use correctly vocabulary related to leisure and industry.</li><li>- Learn vocabulary related with weather and transport.</li><li>- Understand the different perspectives on tourism in various cultures, as well as landmarks and touristic attractions in England.</li><li>- Talk to their native partners about the tourism and activities to do in Logroño and comparing them with the activities from London.</li></ul>		<b>Competences</b>  LC  ICT  SCC  CA	
<b>CONTENTS →</b>			
<b>BLOCK 1: Listening comprehension</b>  -Video about different means of transports.  -Listening about differences of temperatures in different countries.	<b>BLOCK 2: Spoken production and spoken interaction</b>  - Talk to your native partner about the tourism, typical things to do in your city.  - Tell your classmates the new things you have learned about England.	<b>BLOCK 3: Reading comprehension</b>  -Read a text about the sightseeing in England.	<b>BLOCK 4: Written expression: production and interaction</b>  -Write an email to a friend talking about your favourite place in the world.
<b>Methodology:</b> Communicative Language Teaching			
<b>Materials and resources:</b> Textbook, Workbook, Computer, Skype, Interactive book, Handouts.			
<b>Assessment:</b> Individual work + Exam of the Unit			

UNIT 4: WE LOVE SPORTS!			FIRST TERM	SESSIONS: 8
<b>Introduction</b> This unit tries to show a general view about the different sports around the world and the most typical sports in England.				
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand and practice the <i>Present Continuous</i>.</li><li>- Use correctly the <i>Present Simple</i> and the <i>Present Continuous</i>.</li><li>- Understand and use correctly vocabulary related to sports.</li><li>- Understand and use correctly vocabulary related to extreme sports.</li><li>- Learn vocabulary related with adventure equipment.</li><li>- Identify the different sports practised around the world.</li></ul>			<b>Competences</b>  LC  ICT  SCC  CA	
<b>CONTENTS →</b>				
<b>BLOCK 1: Listening comprehension</b>  - Listening about sports and the different sports around the world.  - Fill in the gaps <i>We are the Champions</i> .	<b>BLOCK 2: Spoken production and spoken interaction</b>  - Talk to their native partners about the typical sports in their countries and their favourite sports.	<b>BLOCK 3: Reading comprehension</b>  -Read a text about the sports advantages and disadvantages.	<b>BLOCK 4: Written expression: production and interaction</b>  -Write an interview with a partner: one of them will be the sporty person and the other one will be the reporter.	
<b>Methodology:</b> Communicative Language Teaching				
<b>Materials and resources:</b> Textbook, Workbook, Kahoot, Computer, Skype, Interactive book, Handouts.				
<b>Assessment:</b> Individual work + Exam of the Unit				



UNIT 5: DO YOU BELIEVE IN MAGIC?		FIRST TERM	SESSIONS: 8
<b>Introduction</b> This unit tries to offer a general view of British legends, superstitions and Halloween. They will work into the use of Past Simple and Past Continuous.			
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand and practice the <i>Past Simple</i> and the <i>Past Continuous</i>.</li><li>- Understand and use correctly vocabulary related to myths and legends.</li><li>- Understand and use correctly vocabulary related to Halloween, magic and superstitions.</li><li>- Be able to write a tale o short story.</li><li>- Identify and apply the structures learned in any kind of text of everyday life situation.</li></ul>		<b>Competences</b>  LC  ICT  SCC  CA	
<b>CONTENTS →</b>			
<b>BLOCK 1: Listening comprehension</b>  - Listening about superstitions in Halloween around the world.  - Filling the gaps <i>This is Halloween</i> song by Marilyn Manson.	<b>BLOCK 2: Spoken production and spoken interaction</b>  - Play a kahoot with their native partners about superstitions in Halloween.  - Talk to their native partners about myths and legends in their country.	<b>BLOCK 3: Reading comprehension</b>  - Read different stories by Edgar Allan Poe.	<b>BLOCK 4: Written expression: production and interaction</b>  -Create a story related to a legend or a myth about the topics worked in class.
<b>Methodology:</b> Communicative Language Teaching			
<b>Materials and resources:</b> Textbook, Workbook, Kahoot, Computer, Skype, Interactive book, Handouts.			
<b>Assessment:</b> Daily work + Global exam (units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) + spoken interaction exam (dialogue between two classmates)			

## 10.2 SECOND TERM

UNIT 6: STREET LIFE			SECOND TERM	SESSIONS: 8
<b>Introduction:</b> This unit tries to offer a deep view about the different foods around the world. Students will also learn the manners to be polite depending on the country they visit. There are common manners and other totally different from one country to other.				
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand and practice the modal verbs <i>can, can't, must, mustn't</i>.</li><li>- Understand and use correctly the <i>some, any, a lot of, much</i> and <i>many</i> with countable and uncountable nouns.</li><li>- Identify the adjectives to describe foods and understand some idioms related to food.</li><li>- Understand and use correctly vocabulary related to healthy food and junk food.</li><li>- Identify and apply the structures learned in any kind of text of everyday life situation.</li><li>- Identify good and bad manners around the world.</li></ul>			<b>Competences</b>  LC  ICT  CA	
<b>CONTENTS →</b>				
<b>BLOCK 1: Listening comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Listening about people from different countries talking about manners.</li><li>- Listening about a guy ordering in a restaurant.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 2: Spoken production and spoken interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Describe different Spanish recipes to their native partner, talk about their favourite food and play a <i>Kahoot</i>.</li><li>- MasterChef contest: In groups, record themselves cooking a meal (breakfast, lunch, dinner, dessert). Describe the instructions in the video.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 3: Reading comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Read comments in different pages about healthy food and junk/fast food.</li><li>- Read recipes on the Internet.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 4: Written expression: production and interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Make a dialogue ordering in a restaurant. Write the dialogue and represent it in front of the class.</li><li>- Advantages of healthy food.</li></ul>	
<b>Methodology:</b> Communicative Language Teaching				
<b>Materials and resources:</b> Textbook, Workbook, Kahoot, Computer, Skype, Interactive book, Handouts.				
<b>Assessment:</b> Daily work + Exam of the unit				

## 10.2.1 Unit 6

### UNIT 6: STREET LIFE

### SECOND TERM: 1st ESO

#### A. Introduction

Despite the fact that the units of the syllabus do not correspond to the textbook *Spectrum 1*, this unit has been selected among the units proposed in that book. Throughout the unit, students will work the four main skills for English as a Second Language that are listening, reading, writing and speaking. Besides, within this unit we want to work the Intercultural Competence in order to teach students cultural aspects around the world, especially differences between Spain and United Kingdom since they have a native partner from this country.

During the lessons students have to show an active involvement, since one of the main objectives is the interaction among them. On the one hand, all the activities which are related to the grammar contents, reading comprehension and listening comprehension will be developed individually. However, they are always allowed to share their questions and opinions to the rest of their classmates. These exercises will be corrected in group but they will be the ones who give compelling reasons to support their answers. On the other hand, they will carry out some speaking activities in pairs or in groups. Moreover, all of them count on a native partner from England to improve their communicative competence. One hour per week, students will go to the computer room to work on different spoken tasks via *Skype* with their native partner.

This unit is organized to last eight sessions of 60 minutes approximately. However, one or two more hours will be used to do the exams of the unit. In each session students will do different activities that they can find in the book as well as the extra material handed by the teacher. The textbook will be only used to practise grammar activities since the topic of the units do not correspond to the ones included in the textbook, as we mentioned previously.

Additionally, it is essential to emphasise that the objectives, contents, competences and assessment criteria established by current regulations have been taken into account to design the sessions. ([Decreto 19/2015, de 12 de junio](#), por el que se establece el currículo de la Educación Secundaria

*Obligatoria y se regulan determinados aspectos sobre su organización así como la evaluación, promoción y titulación del alumnado de la Comunidad Autónoma de La Rioja).*

Finally, it is important to say that a chart will be used to indicate the different activities, contents, objectives and timing which are involved in each session.

## **B. Objectives**

Students must achieve the following goals:

1. Understand and identify the modal verbs (*can, can't, must, mustn't, have to, has to*).
2. Understand and use correctly the quantifiers *some, any, a lot of, much* and *many* with countable and uncountable nouns.
3. Understand and use correctly vocabulary related to food from different countries.
4. Understand and use correctly vocabulary related to recipes and instructions required to describe a recipe.
5. Be able to use the quantifiers: *some, any, a lot of, much, many* with countable and uncountable nouns to have conversations in groups and with their native partners.
6. Read and understand comments about healthy food and junk food in forums.
7. Read and understand articles with instructions to prepare a meal (recipes).
8. Be able to understand a conversation ordering in a restaurant.
9. Understand and identify good and bad manners in different countries in terms of food.
10. Understand a conversation among people from different countries talking about manners.
11. Talk to their native partners in order to describe a typical recipe from their own country.

12. Identify some useful tools to work in class such as *Kahoot* and *Skype*.
13. Be able to use new technologies in order to record themselves cooking a meal in groups. Describe the instructions in the video.
14. Make a dialogue by using the expressions learnt during the unit for ordering in a restaurant.
15. Identify some idioms with food in order to use them in the right context.
16. Be able to use correctly the grammar learnt during the unit.
17. Be able to use vocabulary and structures correctly to have a conversation.

Finally, it is essential to clarify that only the numbers will be included in the chart to indicate the objectives involved in each activity.

### **C. Competences**

According to LOMCE, there are some key competences (basic competences) that students must acquire during the compulsory education to integrate knowledge, skills and attitudes in a practical way to solve problems and react appropriately in a variety of contexts and situations. These competences are included in the curriculum and are considered to be of vital importance.

Due to the fact that only one unit will be developed, the competences mentioned below are the ones involved in this specific unit:

- a. Competence in linguistic communication (LC)
- b. Digital competence in processing information and use of ICT (ICT)
- d. Learning to learn (LL)
- e. Social and civic competences (SCC)
- f. Cultural awareness and expression (CA)

Lastly, we would like to clarify that during the development of this unit, only the acronyms of each competence will be used in the chart to indicate which ones are involved in each activity.

## D. Contents

As it has been mentioned, the contents that will be taught along the whole academic year are divided into four different modules. In addition to the main four skills, it is important to clarify that there are also socio-cultural aspects and intercultural awareness involved in the teaching process.

The contents presented below belong to the teaching-learning process of this particular unit, since they are adjusted for this unit:

### A) Reading Comprehension

1. PowerPoint Presentation → Vocabulary related with food.
2. PowerPoint Presentation → Food around the world.
3. Kahoot Quiz → Test your knowledge.
4. Reading comprehension: *Eat on the street*.
5. Reading comprehension: *More commercials for junk food being shown to black kids, study says*.
6. Exercise with idioms about food.
7. Examples of recipes in the textbook and on the Internet.
8. Kahoot Quiz → Table manners.
9. Teacher handouts.
10. Reading comprehension exam: *Thousand-year-old honey still good to eat, doctor says*.
11. Board game: *Food glorious food*.

### B) Listening Comprehension

1. Conversation in the market.
2. Listen and watch other videos of the MasterChef contest.
3. Listen to their native partner talking about food and manners.

4. Understanding of classmates' dialogues (*Ordering in a restaurant*)

5. Listening conversation: *Ordering in a restaurant*.

6. Listening about manners around the world and in USA.

7. Listening comprehension exam: *Picnic preparations*.

C) Spoken production and spoken interaction

1. Active participation in class.

2. Conversation in pairs and in groups.

3. Conversation with their native partners about the topic.

4. Dialogue in pairs presented in front of the class.

5. Board game to talk about different topics in order to practice conversation about food.

6. Discuss in group to share different opinions.

7. MasterChef contest: video.

D) Written production and interaction

1. Making a dialogue in pairs.

2. Use of English (grammar and vocabulary)

3. Written exam: *Advantages of healthy food*.

4. Notes about new vocabulary and structures learn during the unit and with their native partners.

5. How to write a recipe.

6. MasterChef contest: instructions and recipe.

7. Exercise with idioms about food.

To conclude, it is important to point out that only the letters (A, B, C or D) will be included in the chart to specify the module involved in each activity.

## **E. Methodology**

First of all, *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)* approach takes part in the learning process of students. They have a native partner who will help them to improve their communicative competence as well as bring them closer to real-life situations. The concept of *communicative competence* stems from CLT and Hymes defined it as the concept based on the idea that “to communicate effectively in a language, speakers need to know how language is used by members of a speech community”. (Hymes, cited in Sánchez-Reyes, 2011, p. 38).

Then, students who acquire communicative competence will be also able to understand cultural aspects from other perspectives and to know how to deal with certain events in different countries. Moreover, they will work in different activities related to spoken production and interaction during the classes. CLT approach makes use of contextualized real-life situations that necessitate communication and students’ motivation to learn that comes from their desire to communicate in authentic ways about meaningful topics.

Furthermore, *Focus on form*, proposed by Michael Long in 1988, will be used to explain the grammar contents included in the unit. This approach tries to make students aware of the grammatical form of language that they are able to use communicatively. Moreover, students will practice activities related to reading comprehension and listening comprehension that are enclosed in the textbook in order to work at it before the exam. Besides, they will do more different activities handed by the teacher in order to practise the skills.

## **F. Activities**

The following chart includes the information related to activities, competences, objectives and contents proposed for each session. Furthermore, this table also comprises the materials and the timing used for each activity.



SESSION 1					
ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	COMPETENCES	CONTENTS	MATERIALS	TIMING
Powerpoint presentation with vocabulary items and related pictures about food.	3	LC	A	Digital whiteboard and notebooks to take notes.	15 mins.
	4	ICT	C		
		CA			
Kahoot with specific foods from other countries. Test students' knowledge about typical food from different countries.	3	LC	A	Digital whiteboard.	30 mins.
	4	LL		The quiz will be carried out by using <i>kahoot</i> . Students will play in groups of three or four people.  <i>Kahoot</i> → <a href="http://bit.ly/2rnMX0u">http://bit.ly/2rnMX0u</a>  <a href="http://bit.ly/2rnuj9h">http://bit.ly/2rnuj9h</a>	
	12	ICT			
		CA			
Talk in pairs about favourite foods from their own country and from other countries if it is possible.	3	LC	B	Notebooks to take their classmates' answers and share them with the rest of the class at the end.	15 mins.
	4	LL	C		
	17	CA			
					Total: 60 mins.

SESSION 2					
ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	COMPETENCES	CONTENTS	MATERIALS	TIMING
Reading comprehension: <i>Eat on the street.</i>	3	LC	A	<i>Spectrum 1</i> Page 74, Exercises 1,2,3,4.  Notebook to do the exercises.	30 mins.
	6	ICT	B		
	7	SCC			
		CA			
Listening comprehension: <i>Talking in the market</i>	3	LC	A	<i>Spectrum 1</i> Page 76, Exercises 1, 3.	30 mins.
	6	CA	B		

	8			Notebook to do the exercises.	
					Total:60 mins.

SESSION 3					
ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	COMPETENCES	CONTENTS	MATERIALS	TIMING
Focus on form: modal verbs (can, can't, must, mustn't)	1	LC	A	Infographics taken from the Internet. <b>(See Appendix I)</b>  Digital whiteboard and blackboard.  Notebook to take notes.	15 mins.
	16	LL	D		
	17	ICT			
Practise exercises of modal verbs in class. Correct the exercises too.	1	LC	A	<i>Spectrum 1</i> Page 75, Exercises 6,7,8.  Notebook to do the exercises.	15 mins.
	16	LL	D		
	17	CA			
Reading comprehension: <i>More commercials for junk food being shown to black kids, study says.</i>				Text taken from <i>Newsele</i> : <a href="http://bit.ly/2slA7NT">http://bit.ly/2slA7NT</a>  Computer room for reading the text and answer the questions.	
					Total: 60 mins.

SESSION 4					
ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	COMPETENCES	CONTENTS	MATERIALS	TIMING
Focus on form: <i>some, any, a lot of, much and many.</i>	2	LC	A	Infographics taken from the Internet. <b>(See Appendix II)</b>  Digital whiteboard and blackboard.  Notebook to take	20 mins.
	5	LL	D		
	16	ICT			

				notes.	
Practise exercises of quantifiers.	2	LC	A	Spectrum 1 Page 77, Exercises 5, 6, 7,8,9.  Notebook to do the exercises.	30 mins.
	5	LL	D		
	16	CA			
<p>Explain the project they have to do in groups of three or four.</p> <p><b>MasterChef Contest →</b> They will have to record themselves while they are cooking a meal (breakfast, lunch, dinner, dessert). They will have to explain the recipe and the instructions to do it. Besides, they will have to record themselves doing the whole steps to present the final meal.</p> <p>They will do this project at home and they will have a deadline to hand it.</p> <p>Apart from the video they will hand a paper with the recipe and the instructions written.</p>	1	LC	A	Videocamera	10 mins.
	2	LL	C	Ingredients	
	4	ICT	D	Notebook to note the steps and the recipe.	
	13	SCC		Vocabulary to describe food handed by the teacher.	
	16	CA		(See Appendix III)	
					Total: 60 mins.

SESSION 5					
ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	COMPETENCES	CONTENTS	MATERIALS	TIMING
Talk to their native partner during one hour about their favourite food in their own country, in other countries, typical food, etc.	1	LC	A	Computer and Skype as the main tool.	60 mins.
	2	LL	B		
	3	ICT	C	Handout made by the teacher →	
	5	CA		Board game	
	17			<b>(See Appendix IV)</b>	
To do that they will play to a board game by using dice in Internet. They have 30 minutes to play in English and 30 minutes to play in Spanish since this activity is a <i>tandem</i> .				Notebook to take notes about new vocabulary or structures learnt.	
					Total: 60 mins.

SESSION 6					
ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	COMPETENCES	CONTENTS	MATERIALS	TIMING
Listening comprehension: <i>Ordering in a restaurant.</i>	3	LC	B	Interactive whiteboard.	10 mins.
	8	ICT		Notebooks to take notes and handout made by the teacher.	
	CA	Listening: <a href="http://bit.ly/2rasT1b">http://bit.ly/2rasT1b</a>			
How to write a recipe.  Read the examples given in the textbook.  Read examples of recipes on the Internet written in	2	LC	A	Interactive whiteboard.	15 mins.
	4	ICT	D	<i>Spectrum 1</i> , Page 80.  Notebook to take notes and to write the recipe.	
	7	CA			
	16				
	17				

English.					
Work in pairs: make a dialogue ordering in a restaurant and represent it in front of the class when the teacher corrects it.	5 14 16	LC LL CA	A C D	Handouts given by the teacher.  Notebook to make the dialogue.	35 mins.
					Total: 60 mins.

SESSION 7					
ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	COMPETENCES	CONTENTS	MATERIALS	TIMING
Talk to their native partner about a recipe.	5 11	LC LL	A B	Computer and Skype as the main tool.	40 mins.
First the Spanish student has to describe and give correct instructions about a recipe of their own country.	16 17	ICT CA	C	Notebook to take notes about new vocabulary or structures learnt.  Paper with the recipe, instructions, ingredients, timing, etc.	
After that, the native partner has to do the same but with a recipe from their own country.					
They will have 40 minutes to do it. 20 to speak in English and 20 to speak in Spanish.					
Play a <i>Kahoot</i> with their native partner about table manners around the world.	9 12 16	LC ICT SCS CA	A B C	Computer and Skype as the main tool.  <i>Kahoot</i> Quiz → <a href="http://bit.ly/2qAomCB">http://bit.ly/2qAomCB</a>	20 mins
They will play at the same time					

and then, they will discuss their results and talk about more different manners in their countries.					
					Total: 60 mins.

SESSION 8					
ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	COMPETENCES	CONTENTS	MATERIALS	TIMING
Exercise with idioms about food.	3 15	LC LL CA	A D	Paper handed by the teacher.  <b>(See Appendix V)</b>  Notebook to take notes of the new vocabulary.	30 mins.
Listening about table manners	3 9 10	LC LL SCS CA	A D	Interactive whiteboard.  <i>Youtube:</i> Table manners around the world: <a href="http://bit.ly/2mZniqO">http://bit.ly/2mZniqO</a>  Table manners in USA: <a href="http://bit.ly/2nnLOlf">http://bit.ly/2nnLOlf</a>	15 mins.
Discuss between the whole class about table manners. Put ideas in common.	1 2 3 5 9	LC SCS CA	B C	Notebook to take notes and to share their opinions.	15 mins
					Total: 60 mins.

EXTRA SESSION FOR THE EXAMS					
ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	COMPETENCES	CONTENTS	MATERIALS	TIMING
Reading Comprehension: <i>Thousand-year-old honey still good to eat, doctor says</i>	1		A		20 mins.
	3	LC	D	Sheet handed by the teacher.	
	6	LL CA		Text taken from Newsela: <a href="http://bit.ly/2rjSl33">http://bit.ly/2rjSl33</a>  (See Appendix VI)	
Listening exam: <i>Picnic preparations</i>	3	LC		Interactive whiteboard.	10 mins.
	17	LL CA	B	Sheet handed by the teacher.	
				Listening taken from <a href="http://www.esl-lab.com/picnic/picrd1.htm">http://www.esl-lab.com/picnic/picrd1.htm</a>  (See Appendix VII)	
Writing and grammar exam.  <i>Write a short essay about the advantages of healthy food.</i>	1		A		30 mins
	2	LC	D	Sheet handed by the teacher.	
	3	CA		(See Appendix VIII)	
	4				
	16				
					Total: 60 mins.

## G. Assessment

According to *Decreto 19/2015, de 12 de junio, por el que se establece el currículo de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y se regulan determinados aspectos sobre su organización así como la evaluación, promoción y titulación del alumnado de la Comunidad Autónoma de La Rioja*, the assessment in ESO is determined by the standards compiled in that document. Each department is

in charge of selecting the standards that are evaluated in each term. Thus, depending on the type of exams, standards change.

In addition, assessment follows summative parameters and formative parameters. For example, formative assessment is used to evaluate spoken production and writing production. Teachers will use a rubric to correct the mistakes and to show the students things they have to improve.

Students receive a grade over 25% for each skill (reading, listening, writing and speaking). A rubric is created to assess the spoken and written production. Thanks to the rubric, students will be able to receive positive or negative feedback in order to improve.

This unit only considers some of the standards of each module included in the *Decreto 19/2015*, dated on 12<sup>th</sup> June.

Within the Reading Module the standards considered are:

- *Entiende los puntos principales de anuncios y material publicitario de revistas o Internet formulados de manera simple y clara, y relacionados con asuntos de su interés.*
- *Capta las ideas principales y algunos detalles de noticias breves y artículos de*
- *revistas para jóvenes en cualquier soporte, ayudándose para ello de los números, los nombres, las ilustraciones y los títulos.*
- *Entiende lo esencial de páginas Web y otros materiales de referencia o consulta, claramente estructurados, sobre temas de interés personal (p. e. una ciudad, un deporte o el medio ambiente), siempre que pueda releer las secciones difíciles y con ayuda del diccionario.*

Within the Listening Module the standards taken into account are:

- *Identifica el sentido general y algunos detalles relevantes de una conversación entre dos interlocutores que tiene lugar en su presencia cuando el tema le resulta conocido y el discurso está articulado con claridad, lentamente y en una variedad estándar de la lengua.*
- *Comprende, en una conversación informal en la que participa, descripciones y narraciones sobre asuntos prácticos de la vida diaria*



*cuando se le habla con claridad, despacio y directamente y si el interlocutor está dispuesto a repetir o reformular lo dicho.*

- *Comprende, con el apoyo de la imagen, las ideas principales e información relevante de presentaciones sencillas y bien estructuradas sobre temas habituales o de interés personal (p. e. música, deporte), siempre y cuando se hable de manera lenta y clara.*

Within the Speaking Module: spoken production and spoken interaction, the following standards are considered:

- *Se desenvuelve en gestiones y transacciones cotidianas (p. e. transporte, compras, u ocio), dando y solicitando la información necesaria.*
- *Participa en conversaciones informales, cara a cara o por teléfono u otros medios técnicos, en las que establece contacto social; intercambia información; hace invitaciones y ofrecimientos; pide y ofrece cosas; pide y da indicaciones o instrucciones, o discute los pasos que hay que seguir para realizar una actividad conjunta.*

Within the Writing Module the following standards are evaluated:

- *Escribe informes muy breves, en formato convencional, con información relevante sobre hechos habituales, describiendo de manera sencilla objetos y lugares, y señalando los principales acontecimientos de forma esquemática.*

### Rubric for spoken production and interaction

Criteria	Level 1 (0-1 Points)	Level 2 (2 Points)	Level 3 (3 Points)	Level 4 (4 Points)
<b>Topic sentence</b>	Bad	Not very good	good	Well developed
<b>Fluency</b>	Bad	Not very good	good	Well developed
<b>Pronunciation</b>	Unclear	Parts clear	Mostly clear	Very clear
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Limited	adequate	sufficient	Extensive
<b>Grammar/ mechanics</b>	Poor	Fair	good	Excellent
<b>Effort</b>	Poor	Fair	good	Excellent

### Rubric for written production and interaction

SCORE [25]	CRITERIA	COMMENTS
Organization (4,5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Text is structured in paragraphs and there are differences between introduction, body and conclusion.</li> <li>The structure of the text is right depending on if it is a letter, email, etc.</li> <li>The ideas are clearly stated.</li> <li>There is a logical sequencing and cohesion.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are no differences between paragraphs and there is only one paragraph for all the ideas.</li> <li>The ideas are disconnected.</li> <li>There is a lack of logical sequencing.</li> <li>There is no structure for the type of writing.</li> </ul>	

Language use (5,5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The student demonstrates that he/she is able to use the language.</li> <li>· There are complex constructions, few errors of grammar.</li> <li>· Good use of verb tenses, pronouns and prepositions.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The constructions are too simple.</li> <li>· Several errors of grammar.</li> <li>· The student doesn't show a control over verb tenses, pronouns and prepositions.</li> </ul>	
Vocabulary (5,5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Effective word choice and usage.</li> <li>· Appropriate register.</li> <li>· Few errors of word form.</li> <li>· The student demonstrates that he/she can use the vocabulary related to the topic.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The student doesn't know vocabulary about the topic.</li> <li>· A lot of errors of word form.</li> <li>· False friends.</li> </ul>	
Contents (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Accuracy to the content. The information is good related to it.</li> <li>· The student achieves the several points that teacher is asking.</li> <li>· Good handwriting.</li> <li>· Good use of linking words.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Irrelevant content to the assigned topic.</li> <li>· The student doesn't follow the points provided by the teacher.</li> <li>· Lack of connectors.</li> <li>· Handwriting illegible.</li> </ul>	
Mechanics (4,5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Accuracy punctuation, capitalization and spelling.</li> <li>· Few errors of spelling.</li> <li>· The number of words is adjusted to the teacher is asking.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· A lot of errors of punctuation, capitalization and spelling.</li> <li>· The number of words exceeds what the teacher has laid down.</li> <li>· The number of words is below expectations.</li> </ul>	

UNIT 7: LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED!			SECOND TERM	SESSIONS: 8
<b>Introduction</b> This unit tries to offer students a general view of ways of flirting in different countries. They will learn how to make hypothesis by using the <i>First conditional</i> . Besides, they will learn vocabulary about love.				
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand and practice the <i>Zero</i> and the <i>First conditional</i>.</li><li>- Understand and use correctly vocabulary related to love, friends and family.</li><li>- Understand and identify the different ways of flirting around the world.</li><li>- Identify and apply the structures learned in any kind of text of everyday life situation.</li><li>- Identify the vocabulary used in relationships.</li></ul>			<b>Competences</b>  LC  ICT  SCC  CA	
<b>CONTENTS →</b>				
<b>BLOCK 1: Listening comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Listening about two people that met on the internet</li><li>- Listening about a first date.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 2: Spoken production and spoken interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Work in an activity created with 'Quizlet' with the native partner. Talk about relationships and typical things to do in a first date.</li><li>- Work in groups: play to a <i>Speed dating</i> between classmates to meet each other. Talk in pairs around 3 minutes and change of partner.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 3: Reading comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Read short texts about real love stories around the world.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 4: Written expression: production and interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Write a report about your favourite/not favourite love story and give opinions.</li></ul>	
<b>Methodology:</b> Communicative Language Teaching				
<b>Materials and resources:</b> Textbook, Workbook, Computer, Skype, Interactive book, Handouts.				
<b>Assessment:</b> Daily work + Exam of the unit				

UNIT 8: CARNIVAL, CARNIVAL!			SECOND TERM    SESSIONS: 8
<b>Introduction</b>  This unit tries to offer students a general view of the Carnival festivity around the world. They will work into the <i>Present Perfect</i> and they will know different traditions to celebrate Carnival.			
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand and practice the <i>Present Perfect</i>.</li><li>- Understand and use correctly vocabulary related to carnival, costumes and masks.</li><li>- Understand and identify the different ways of celebrating carnival around the world.</li><li>- Identify and apply the structures learned in any kind of text of everyday life situation.</li><li>- Identify the different festivities people usually dress up apart from Carnival.</li></ul>		<b>Competences</b>  LC  ICT  SCC  CA	
<b>CONTENTS →</b>			
<b>BLOCK 1: Listening comprehension</b>  - Listening about Carnival in different countries.	<b>BLOCK 2: Spoken production and spoken interaction</b>  - Talk to their native partners about the main events in Carnival in their own country.  - Work in groups: record themselves making a costume, explaining materials used to make it, the type of costume and the instructions to do it.	<b>BLOCK 3: Reading comprehension</b>  - Reading on Venice Carnival.	<b>BLOCK 4: Written expression: production and interaction</b>  - Describe an image about carnival handed by the teacher.
<b>Methodology:</b> Communicative Language Teaching			
<b>Materials and resources:</b> Textbook, Workbook, Computer, Skype, Interactive book, Handouts.			
<b>Assessment:</b> Daily work + Exam of the unit			

UNIT 9: EASTER			SECOND TERM    SESSIONS: 8
<b>Introduction</b> This unit tries to offer students a general view of the main traditions in Easter around the world.			
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand and practice <i>Adverbs of frequency, verbs + -ing, and verbs + noun.</i></li><li>- Understand and use correctly vocabulary related to Easter and festivities.</li><li>- Understand and identify the different ways of celebrating Easter around the world.</li><li>- Identify and apply the structures learned in any kind of text of everyday life situation.</li></ul>		<b>Competences</b>  LC  ICT  SCC  CA	
<b>CONTENTS →</b>			
<b>BLOCK 1: Listening comprehension</b>  - Listen to a conversation between two students from different countries talking about Easter.	<b>BLOCK 2: Spoken production and spoken interaction</b>  - Talk about the main traditions in Easter in their countries. Easter bunny, Easter bonnet...  - Work in groups: create an Easter bonnet in pairs and describe it in front of the class.	<b>BLOCK 3: Reading comprehension</b>  - Reading on Easter holiday around the world.	<b>BLOCK 4: Written expression: production and interaction</b>  - Write a letter telling your last Easter holiday.
<b>Methodology:</b> Communicative Language Teaching			
<b>Materials and resources:</b> Textbook, Workbook, Computer, Skype, Interactive book, Handouts.			
<b>Assessment:</b> Daily work + Exam of the unit			

## 10.3 THIRD TERM

UNIT 10: ARE YOU SCARED OF THE FUTURE?			SECOND TERM	SESSIONS: 8
<b>Introduction</b>  This unit tries to offer students a view of the new technological advances. They will be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of these changes. They will learn the <i>Future simple</i> and the <i>be going to</i> .				
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand and practice the <i>Future simple</i> and the <i>be going to</i>.</li><li>- Understand and use correctly vocabulary related to technology.</li><li>- Understand and identify the differences between <i>future simple</i> and <i>be going to</i>.</li><li>- Identify and make predictions about the future.</li><li>- Make plans for near future.</li></ul>			<b>Competences</b>  LC  ICT  CA	
<b>CONTENTS →</b>				
<b>BLOCK 1: Listening comprehension</b>  - Listening about some scientists talking about the future.  - Conversation between two students talking about the life on the moon.	<b>BLOCK 2: Spoken production and spoken interaction</b>  - Work in an activity created with ‘Quizlet’ with the native partner. Complete a crossword online with the help of their native partner to explain meanings.  - Talk in pairs about their favourite fiction films or books and give reasons.	<b>BLOCK 3: Reading comprehension</b>  - Read texts about the <i>Robots</i> and the future of human being.	<b>BLOCK 4: Written expression: production and interaction</b>  - Write an essay explaining the advantages and disadvantages of the new technological advances.	
<b>Methodology:</b> Communicative Language Teaching				
<b>Materials and resources:</b> Textbook, Workbook, Kahoot, Computer, Skype, Interactive book, Handouts.				
<b>Assessment:</b> Daily work + Global exam (units 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10) + spoken production (monologue)				

UNIT 11: EUROPE			THIRD TERM	SESSIONS: 8
<b>Introduction</b> Along this unit students become researchers. They will have to investigate different things about the continent of Europe with their native partner. They can choose the topic in which they would like to investigate. For instance, they can talk about traditions, periods in history, science, geography etc.				
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand and put into practice the grammar structures and vocabulary learnt during the course.</li><li>- Motivate students and involve them in their own learning process.</li><li>- Gain knowledge about more meaningful content apart from linguistic structures.</li><li>- Be free to investigate in their own interests and learn how to make a project correctly.</li></ul>			<b>Competences</b>  LC  ICT  SCC  CA	
<b>CONTENTS →</b>				
<b>BLOCK 1: Listening comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Listening about different investigators or relevant people talking about Europe.</li><li>- Other resources selected by the student.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 2: Spoken production and spoken interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Work with their native partner to make the project together.</li><li>- Present the project made in front of the class.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 3: Reading comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Read texts about curiosities in Europe.</li><li>-Other resources selected by the student.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 4: Written expression: production and interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Write an essay explaining the ideas of their project.</li></ul>	
<b>Methodology:</b> Communicative Language Teaching				
<b>Materials and resources:</b> Kahoot, Computer, Skype, Interactive whiteboard, Handouts.				
<b>Assessment:</b> Daily work + writing exam + spoken production (explain the project).				



UNIT 12: AFRICA			THIRD TERM	SESSIONS: 8
<b>Introduction</b> Along this unit students become researchers. They will have to investigate different things about the continent of Africa with their native partner. They can choose the topic in which they would like to investigate. For instance, they can talk about traditions, periods in history, science, geography etc.				
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand and put into practice the grammar structures and vocabulary learnt during the course.</li><li>- Motivate students and involve them in their own learning process.</li><li>- Gain knowledge about more meaningful content apart from linguistic structures.</li><li>- Be free to investigate in their own interests and learn how to make a project correctly.</li></ul>			<b>Competences</b>  LC  ICT  SCC  CA	
<b>CONTENTS →</b>				
<b>BLOCK 1: Listening comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Listening about different archeologists talking about Africa.</li><li>- Other resources selected by the student.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 2: Spoken production and spoken interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Work with their native partner to make the project together.</li><li>- Present the project made in front of the class.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 3: Reading comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Read texts about curiosities in Africa.</li><li>- Other resources selected by the student.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 4: Written expression: production and interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Write an essay explaining the ideas of their project.</li></ul>	
<b>Methodology:</b> Communicative Language Teaching				
<b>Materials and resources:</b> Kahoot, Computer, Skype, Interactive whiteboard, Handouts.				
<b>Assessment:</b> Daily work + writing exam + spoken production (explain the project).				

UNIT 13: AMERICA			THIRD TERM	SESSIONS: 8
<b>Introduction</b> Along this unit students become researchers. They will have to investigate different things about the continent of America with their native partner. They can choose the topic in which they would like to investigate. For instance, they can talk about traditions, periods in history, science, geography etc.				
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand and put into practice the grammar structures and vocabulary learnt during the course.</li><li>- Motivate students and involve them in their own learning process.</li><li>- Gain knowledge about more meaningful content apart from linguistic structures.</li><li>- Be free to investigate in their own interests and learn how to make a project correctly.</li></ul>			<b>Competences</b>  LC  ICT  SCC  CA	
<b>CONTENTS →</b>				
<b>BLOCK 1: Listening comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Listening about relevant people talking about America.</li><li>- Other resources selected by the student.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 2: Spoken production and spoken interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Work with their native partner to make the project together.</li><li>- Present the project made in front of the class.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 3: Reading comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Read texts about curiosities in America.</li><li>- Other resources selected by the student.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 4: Written expression: production and interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Write an essay explaining the ideas of their project.</li></ul>	
<b>Methodology:</b> Communicative Language Teaching				
<b>Materials and resources:</b> Kahoot, Computer, Skype, Interactive whiteboard, Handouts.				
<b>Assessment:</b> Daily work + writing exam + spoken production (explain the project).				

UNIT 14: ASIA			THIRD TERM	SESSIONS: 8
<b>Introduction</b> Along this unit students become researchers. They will have to investigate different things about the continent of Asia with their native partner. They can choose the topic in which they would like to investigate. For instance, they can talk about traditions, periods in history, science, geography etc.				
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand and put into practice the grammar structures and vocabulary learnt during the course.</li><li>- Motivate students and involve them in their own learning process.</li><li>- Gain knowledge about more meaningful content apart from linguistic structures.</li><li>- Be free to investigate in their own interests and learn how to make a project correctly.</li></ul>			<b>Competences</b>  LC  ICT  SCC  CA	
<b>CONTENTS →</b>				
<b>BLOCK 1: Listening comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Listening about different people talking about Asia.</li><li>- Other resources selected by the student.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 2: Spoken production and spoken interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Work with their native partner to make the project together.</li><li>- Present the project made in front of the class.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 3: Reading comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Read texts about curiosities in Asia.</li><li>- Other resources selected by the student.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 4: Written expression: production and interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Write an essay explaining the ideas of their project.</li></ul>	
<b>Methodology:</b> Communicative Language Teaching				
<b>Materials and resources:</b> Kahoot, Computer, Skype, Interactive whiteboard, Handouts.				
<b>Assessment:</b> Daily work + writing exam + spoken production (explain the project).				

UNIT 15: OCEANIA			THIRD TERM	SESSIONS: 8
<b>Introduction</b> Along this unit students become researchers. They will have to investigate different things about the continent of Oceania with their native partner. They can choose the topic in which they would like to investigate. For instance, they can talk about traditions, periods in history, science, geography etc.				
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand and put into practice the grammar structures and vocabulary learnt during the course.</li><li>- Motivate students and involve them in their own learning process.</li><li>- Gain knowledge about more meaningful content apart from linguistic structures.</li><li>- Be free to investigate in their own interests and learn how to make a project correctly.</li></ul>			<b>Competences</b>  LC  ICT  SCC  CA	
<b>CONTENTS →</b>				
<b>BLOCK 1: Listening comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Listening about different people talking about Oceania.</li><li>- Other resources selected by the student.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 2: Spoken production and spoken interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Work with their native partner to make the project together.</li><li>- Present the project made in front of the class.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 3: Reading comprehension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Read texts about curiosities in Oceania.</li><li>- Other resources selected by the student.</li></ul>	<b>BLOCK 4: Written expression: production and interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Write an essay explaining the ideas of their project.</li></ul>	
<b>Methodology:</b> Communicative Language Teaching				
<b>Materials and resources:</b> Kahoot, Computer, Skype, Interactive whiteboard, Handouts.				
<b>Assessment:</b> Daily work + writing exam + spoken production (explain the project).				

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## IV. RESEARCH AND INNOVATIVE PROJECT

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### IMPROVING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE AND INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE THROUGH TELECOLLABORATION: TANDEM VIA *SKYPE*

#### ABSTRACT

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has been traditionally focused on teaching language contents such as grammar and vocabulary instead of trying to bring students into contact with intercultural issues. Therefore, the purpose of this project is to use an innovative tool in order to help them to develop Intercultural Competence (IC) and to enhance Communicative Competence. *Skype* is an unused tool by teachers in pedagogical practice, but it could be a good way to catch the attention and the interest of students in the English subject. Two groups of Spanish students are involved in this experimental study. The project provides activities focused on conversations and cultural topics in order to maintain English-speaking habits and improve students' oral skill by means of online tandem. This study seeks to demonstrate that social networks and telecollaboration are great tools in order to develop IC and to improve Communicative Competence. Hence, results are expected to show an increase level in oral skill, as well as to make students aware of the differences and similarities among cultures. Finally, the conclusion reveals positive improvements in learners' knowledge and further research is also proposed.

*Keywords:* intercultural competence, communicative competence, telecollaboration, tandem, social network

## RESUMEN

Tradicionalmente, la asignatura de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera (ILE) se ha centrado en la enseñanza de contenidos lingüísticos relacionados con la gramática y el vocabulario, dejando a un lado el contacto con otras culturas. Por lo tanto, este proyecto tiene como objetivo promover el uso de una herramienta innovadora para ayudar a los alumnos a desarrollar la competencia intercultural y mejorar la competencia comunicativa. La herramienta de *Skype* no ha sido utilizada pedagógicamente, pero puede ser una buena forma de atraer la atención y el interés de los estudiantes hacia la asignatura de inglés. En el proyecto participan dos grupos de estudiantes españoles y con él se pretende proporcionar actividades centradas en conversaciones y en temas culturales para que, mediante el *tándem* a través de Internet, los estudiantes se habitúen a hablar inglés y puedan mejorar así la competencia oral. Con este estudio se quiere demostrar que, tanto las redes sociales como la telecolaboración son grandes herramientas para desarrollar la competencia intercultural y mejorar la competencia comunicativa. Por consiguiente, se espera que los resultados muestren una mejora en la habilidad oral, así como que los estudiantes sean más conscientes de las diferencias y similitudes entre culturas. Finalmente, la conclusión muestra mejoras positivas en el conocimiento de los estudiantes y se propone alguna idea para futuras investigaciones.

*Palabras clave:* competencia intercultural, competencia comunicativa, telecolaboración, *tánde*, red social



## 1. Introduction

As a future teacher I am concerned about the teaching-learning process that EFL teachers follow in Spain. According to my experience, EFL teachers are focused exclusively on the teaching of linguistic content leaving aside cultural issues and communicative competence.

However, people are increasingly aware of the importance that culture implies in order to learn a foreign language. EFL teachers have to take advantage of knowing other cultures and act as cultural mediators to transfer the same knowledge to their students. Hence, this study aims at developing students' intercultural competence, as well as to enhance their communicative competence by means of direct contact with real-life.

Furthermore, other issue that differs from the traditional teaching-learning process used in Spain is the implementation of new tools that have been designed in order to avoid the repetitive classes based on teaching grammar or vocabulary. Therefore, my attempt with the present paper is to study whether the implementation of face-to-face conversation via *Skype* between native and non-native speakers can help students to develop Intercultural Competence and to improve Communicative Competence. It is essential to bring students closer other sociocultural environments in order to let them be able to compare the differences and similarities among countries and cultures.

Bearing this in mind, the present study deals with the following points. It includes a review of the literature in which it is vital to talk about the concept of culture and intercultural communicative competence, the concept of connectivism as a new learning theory and telecollaboration in order to enhance communicative competence. The study also includes a description of the methodology that I will be using for the study, as well as some limitations that one may encounter, the number of participants, the instruments for data collection and the procedure. Finally, the expected results will be briefly discussed and the conclusion and possible proposals for further research.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1 Culture and Intercultural Communicative Competence**

Culture has always been a key word for language teachers, but it is not until nowadays that the social media is becoming more apparent, when international cultural understanding is being solved. The main aim of teaching a foreign language is to find the best way to do it, which is not always easy.

Language and culture are strongly interrelated and language is the primary vehicle to transmit cultural beliefs, values and rules. If there is no language, it will be really difficult to know the culture and if there is no culture, there will be a lack of knowledge in language (Li Sun, 2013).

The purpose of teaching a language is to learn how to communicate in the target language in order to be aware of the traditions and different customs (Yi Qu, 2010). Regarding communication, we should take into consideration the theory of psychological development related to the Vygotskian social constructivism which states that human knowledge stems from social interaction and context (Vygotski, 1978).

Therefore, social interaction helps to develop both, language and culture. However, most of the time, the lack of cultural knowledge has led to misunderstandings between native and non-native speakers. Thus, we could state that unawareness of culture involves barriers to know the language in depth. This is why the teaching of culture has become one of the most important points to teach foreign languages. Nowadays, language teachers pay attention both to linguistic content and to real contact with people and culture.. Traditionally, foreign cultural information has been shown throughout explanations and expositions carried out within the classes. Nevertheless, the transfer of culture is currently doing by means of real contact with people from foreign countries. "The culture of people, in its broad sense, refers to all aspects of shared life in community." (Yi Qu, 2010, p. 59). That is the reason why language teachers are trying that their students keep in touch with native speakers, since it is the best way to learn both culture and language.

Furthermore, in relation to culture, we should also take into account the Intercultural Competence (IC) and the Intercultural Communicative

Competence (ICC), which can be defined as “complex abilities that are required to perform *effectively* and *appropriately* when interacting with others who are linguistically and culturally different from oneself” Fantini (cited in Tsagari and Banerjee, 2016, p.185). Many language teaching experts see ICC as an extension of communicative competence. Then, “IC is to a large extent the ability to cope with one’s own cultural background in interaction with others” Beneke (cited in Canková, 2007, p.11-12). Thus, people who have Intercultural Competence “has knowledge of one or more cultures and social identities and have the capacity to discover and relate to new people from other contexts for which they have not been prepared directly” Byram and Fleming (cited in Canková, 2007, p. 11-12).

After making a review between the different intercultural competence models, we will point out Byram’s model (1997) of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC). This author proposes that IC consists of five different factors called *saviors*, including *savoir être*, *savoir s’engager*, *savoir apprendre/faire* and *savoir comprendre*.

Therefore, IC, as proposed by Byram (2000, párr. 8) consists of five elements or *saviors*:

- Attitudes: “curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own”.
- Knowledge: “of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction”.
- Skills of interpreting and relating: “ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one's own”.
- Skills of discovery and interaction: “ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction”.
- Critical cultural awareness/political education: “an ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries”.

Moreover, we would like to stress Deardoff's model too, since it is one of the most recent conceptualizations of intercultural competence. This model is divided into individual and interaction level. Besides, it includes several features mentioned in the rest of the ICC models, but the schematic illustration represents different perspectives on intercultural competence. This model represents the key concepts of Fantini's model (emphasis on effective and appropriate communication) and Ting-Toomey and Kurogi's model (empathy and observation) and it also shows the central components of Byram's model (curiosity, openness, knowledge and skills). (Tsagari and Banerjee, 2016).

Finally, we would like to highlight that people who have Intercultural Competence usually have less stereotypes than people who are not in contact with the culture. Together with the knowledge of different cultures, as Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) establishes, stereotypes may be reduced. Thus, CEFR agrees with us stressing the importance of sociocultural knowledge in order to students pay attention to the traditions, customs, manners, body language, etc. from different countries before judging people.

## **2.2. From traditional learning theories to *Connectivism***

Over the past few decades, digital development has been one of the most relevant aspects that are taking part in education. Hence, traditional learning theories such as behaviorism, cognitivism and constructivism are leaving aside to move learning theories into a digital age. The new theory proposed by Siemens (2004) is known as *connectivism* and it is defined as "the integration of principles explored by chaos, network and complexity and self-organization theories" (Siemens, 2004, párr. 25). Connectivism intends to encourage people to learn by means of international network connections. "Computer networks, power grids, and social networks all function on the simple principle that people, groups, systems, nodes, entities can be connected to create an integrated whole" (Siemens, 2004, párr. 22).

As everyone knows, social relationships have always existed, but together with the development of technology, these relations have changed throughout history. Over the past few years, communicative competence only consisted of communicating with people who lived around us and there was no interest in hearing from people around the world. However, nowadays, we have entered

into a new era that is controlled by Internet. This evolution is known as *globalization* which is a process of change in which the cultural homogenization and the standardization of technology arise (Gutiérrez, 2012). Globalization has led to the creation of new programs and applications that let people communicate by means of social networks. These new networks are characterised by allow people from around the world to communicate and to share opinions, differences and similarities among cultures, etc. Thus, connectivism puts particular emphasis on trying that people improve communicative competence throughout social networks.

Therefore, it is a fact that teachers are more frequently using digital technologies as the main tools to teach a language. Hence, online learning is one of the examples, which explains why people are increasingly involved in their own learning process. Siemens also relates connectivism to a very important concept which is *self-organization* defined “as the spontaneous formation of well organized structures, patterns, or behaviors, from random initial conditions” Rocha (cited in Siemens, 2004, párr. 21).

According to Giesbrecht (cited in Gutiérrez, 2012), connectivism should be regarded as a pedagogical proposal which provides learners with the ability to connect each other by means of social and collaborative networks. It is considered that blogs, forums and other social networks let people from different countries to exchange information and create collaborative sites in order to interact and use *negotiation of meaning* for language development.

### **2.3. Communicative competence via telecollaboration: Skype**

Technological tools used for education have been evolving over time. The one we are dealing with in this project is telecollaboration, which is defined as “the use of online communication tools to bring together language learners in different countries for the development of collaborative project work and intercultural exchange” (O’Dowd and Ritter, 2006, p. 623).

As it has been mentioned above, new social networks are the best option to transfer the culture, as well as to develop communicative competence. In my opinion, the reason is that the direct contact with real-life experiences is an effective and useful way to access knowledge. Thus, if Internet is used in the

right way, it can enable people to communicate with others in spite of the geographical distance. Traditionally, the integration of telecollaboration tools in education has been asynchronous with activities like emails or letter exchanges.(O'Dowd, 2008). Hence, the aim of this project is to introduce e-tandem learning in education to facilitate a partnership between L2 learners and native speakers of the target language in order to work on a synchronous oral communication. Tandem learning involves one native speaker of each language who has to communicate and provide feedback to each other through online communication tools, in this case via *Skype* (O'Dowd, 2008). Tandem learning is a learning model which consists of the collaboration between two people from different countries who have a common goal. The aim is that both Spanish and English students learn the foreign language as well as to help each other to do it. Tandem learning only works if both students succeed in their learning process. (Canga Alonso, 2012).

Online intercultural exchange has its origins in 1920 and since the beginning, it has become one of the most important pillars of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) and it has involved a great advance in the development of intercultural awareness and ICC. This is due to the fact that learners provide their partners with information about themselves, their schools, their towns and their own culture (O'Dowd, 2008).

The concept of CMC is described as a pedagogical tool useful to exchange knowledge at one point. Some authors such as Warschauer (1996, 1997) and Kerm (1995) indicate some advantages of CMC instead of face-to-face communication. They affirm that using this tool increases students' attention to linguistic structures and gives an equal participation between the two learners. (Mesa, 2014).

The main principles in order to achieve success on tandem learning are the principle of reciprocity and the principle of learner autonomy. By using this telecollaboration tool, students are free to decide what to talk about, in what depth, what feedback they receive, negotiation of meaning, etc. (O'Rourke, 2007). It is true that students will receive instructions about the topic and tasks they should accomplish together with their native partner, but they are allowed to talk about more things if they want to.

We would like to stress the principle of learner autonomy since this principle is still studied concerning language and culture learning process in the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence. This concept is defined as “the capacity to take control over one’s own learning” Benson (cited in Zumbihl, 2012, p.228). Then, during the tandem learning the center of the process are learner’s self-reflection and self-development and teachers usually acts as guides or facilitators (Zumbihl, 2012). Thus, one important objective of this project is that students will be able to take control over their own learning.

However, before acquiring the ability of learning autonomously, “they are likely to need advice on how to organise their learning, manage their attitude to learning, and develop appropriate learning techniques and strategies” (Little and Brammerts, 1996, p.33). Hence, they have to be taught to use the language spontaneously as a means of communication. Thus, they will be provided with some instructions before starting tandem learning.

ICFLE, proposed by Thorne (2003) is the Internet mediated intercultural foreign language education and it is referred to all the Internet tools used to communicate. ICFLE contributes to the information exchange among learners and native experts and it also contributes to the cultural understanding. However, some researchers such as Belz (2002), Coleman (1998), Fischer (1998) and O’Dowd (2003), state that cultural understanding is not possible to acquire only with an intercultural contact. Thus, they have developed some different models to help learners gain cultural understanding (Tian and Wang, 2010). There are three main models of telecollaboration: eTandem model, Cultura model and eTwinning model.

The first one, *eTandem* model, is used in a wide range of institutional and pedagogical situations and is the model that we mainly follow to base my project. It consists of making common activities with a native speaker in a synchronous or an asynchronous exchange. This model is quite interesting since learners should communicate each other directly by means of social networks and it is quite motivating for them. (O’Rourke, 2007).

The second model is called *Cultura* and it consists of connecting online students from different countries in order to develop students’ intercultural competence. “Cultura uses a comparative approach and asks students to

analyze and compare similar materials from their respective cultures”. (Levet, 2015 párr. 2). Hence, this model is also present in our project since students not only exchange information to improve communicative competence, but also deal with cultural issues to compare the differences and similarities between their countries.

The third model of telecollaboration is called *eTwinning* and it differs from the previous models since “it is essentially a network of schools and educators within the European Union which avails of the tools and platforms provided on eTwinning portal to engage students in collaborative international projects” (Domínguez, 2007, p.85). Regarding this third model we state that it is quite interesting in order to bring students closer to other sociocultural environments. However, in my opinion it is not the best way to improve a foreign language since students are not keeping directly in touch with native speakers. Therefore, I consider that eTandem and Cultura models are more appropriate for our project.

Therefore, taking telecollaboration as the starting point, and following the models of *eTandem* and *Cultura*, I propose a project using *Skype* as the main tool in order to let students compare cultural aspects between their own country and the foreign country. The main goal is that they are able to compare information to establish similarities or differences between the two cultures. Nevertheless, there is a final task which consists of a collaborative project that will be shown to the rest of the class in the form of a presentation. From my point of view, telecollaboration has become a powerful tool for foreign language teaching.

Besides, *Skype* service has become very popular since it is a free tool and the whole population is allowed to use it. Hence, this project is designed to let all learners enjoy with this service. On the one hand, *Skype tandem exchange* tries “to get students in front of the computer and involved in the exchange” and, on the other hand, it tries “to emphasize authenticity within the conversation” (Thomas, 2009, p. 103). Furthermore, it is important to point out that many previous studies have established the desirable qualities in tandem tasks. Thomas (2009) stresses the *emphasis on communication*, the *goal-*



*oriented aspect for both L1 and L2 speakers and the maximal exploitation of native-speaker interaction.*

However, in spite of the beneficial outcomes that telecollaboration has shown for ICC, some studies have demonstrated that this is a very complex activity to integrate in foreign language classrooms. Sometimes, these practices result in negative attitudes towards the partner group and their culture because of different misunderstandings (O'Dowd, 2008). Therefore, our final objective will be the students' experience of telecollaboration. We would like to know the students' reactions and attitudes to this learning process and how this tool can help them to improve their intercultural communicative competence.

### **3. Methodology**

The main goal of the present study is to examine if students at the beginning of secondary school are able to improve their intercultural competence and their communicative competence working directly with real contexts. Furthermore, this improvement includes secondary objectives related to pronunciation skills. Therefore, we propose tandem learning through *Skype* between students studying English at CPC Escuelas Pías in Spain, and students studying Spanish at Clifton High School in England. In this project students will develop collaborative work by using *Skype* as the main tool complemented with tasks and documents handed by the teacher.

Thus, the most important goals of this project are:

- To promote intercultural awareness and understanding between English and Spanish students as well as to motivate students who study a foreign language.
- To be able to talk about a huge variety of topics that are relevant to students.
- To improve oral skills and confidence by keeping in touch with authentic context and interesting activities.

The students will be assigned a partner from the foreign country in order to establish face to face relationship via *Skype*. This activity will last a course and it will be a continuous project for the next courses of ESO and Baccalaureate used in teaching English as a Second Language.

This project consists of practicing communicative competence during the lessons. One hour per week, students will practice their oral skill with their foreign partners in the computer room, in which students will have their own computer and their own headphones to do this activity. The teacher is always here to help the students if there is any kind of misunderstanding with their foreign partners. They should talk about some topics related to their daily routine, their hobbies, their family, their town, etc. to know each other. Besides, these topics are directly related to the contents of the curriculum and the units studied in class. Due to the fact that it is a tandem, students will talk half an hour in English and half an hour in Spanish in order to let both Spanish and English students communicate in their L2. Moreover, students are allowed to talk with their partners at home if they want to practice more. At the end of the course they have to make a presentation introducing their native partner to the rest of the class. Furthermore, they will also include their new learning experiences and new things that they have learnt during this project.

Regarding the teacher, he/she has an important role to put into practice this project. First of all, he/she gets in touch with the Spanish language teacher at Clifton High School, and they make a list of topics that would be interesting for students and that are adjusted to the curriculum of both schools. The next step is to create different activities that would be provided to the students in order to carry out the “Skype-meetings”. After that, teachers provide students with an email account that belongs to the school they are studying in. The fact is that students cannot use their personal account to be involved in this project because it could cause some problems to the school institution. Thus, they will be provided with an email account which includes their full name and the school name such as [cristinamadorran@escolapiosemaus.org](mailto:cristinamadorran@escolapiosemaus.org)

### **3.1 Assessment in telecollaboration**

There is no common standard in order to assess activities carried out through telecollaboration. Sometimes, the assessment criteria is difficult to establish due to the hindrances that cultural aspects can imply.

Along our project, different instruments will be used to assess the changes in students’ knowledge, as we will see in the *instruments* section. The most difficult part to assess is if students have changed their attitudes and have

become more tolerant with the cultural differences and similarities. In order to do that, students will complete a questionnaire at the beginning and at the end of the course. Thanks to this questionnaire, we will check if their attitudes towards English have changed or not. Besides, they will do an oral exam at the beginning and at the end of the project in order to test if they have improved their communicative competence.

### **3.2 Research questions**

After reviewing the literature review and with this project in mind, this study is designed to address the following research questions:

- What is the initial level of communicative competence that students present before the tandem? And after that?
- Is there any significant difference between the control group and the experimental group related to the speaking skills? And in relation to the cultural knowledge?
- Can we observe any changes in student's attitudes about English learning after using tandem?

## **4. Participants**

A total of 60 students will participate in the study. All of them are in the first year of ESO and belong to CPC Escuelas Pías. However, they use different methods of learning. The first group of 30 informants belongs to the traditional English class and represents the control group. The second group of 30 informants will participate in the project and will represent the experimental group. Then, the final version comprises a total of 60 students, of which 22 were male (36,66%) and 38 were female (63,33%). The age of the participants ranged from 11 to 13 years old.

The sample is heterogeneous since there are a variety of cultures and social environment and the mother tongue is not always the same for everyone. Our sample differs in the input of English that learners receive. The control group does not practise oral skill similarly to the experimental group.

In order to organise the groups, we have decided to select them depending on students' skills in the English subject. Therefore, those students with more

difficulties to learn English will participate in the project, whereas the students with a better level of English will represent the control group. The aim is to motivate students with more difficulties to learn English, as well as to improve their English level to reach the control group level. It is true that the control group does not have the same opportunities to improve their English, but being a research project could be implemented to the rest of the courses if the experiment is successful.

## **5. Instruments**

In the present study we are using different instruments to evaluate the communicative competence. On the one hand, we are taking into account the descriptors about speaking (spoken interaction and spoken production) that are established in the Common European Framework of Reference for A1-A2 levels, which correspond to the course of the sample we are analyzing. On the other hand, the contents and the learning standards related to speaking skill that are included in the curriculum of La Rioja for the first year of ESO are also taken into account.

First of all, a speaking test is going to be used to evaluate the communicative competence at the beginning of the course. Students should make a short dialogue in pairs about their hobbies and their daily routine to plan something to do for the weekend. This dialogue does not have to last more than 5 minutes. Furthermore, they are going to be recorded with the school's and parent's permission, due to the fact that it would be easier for teachers to analyze the structures they use, the vocabulary, their fluency and their pronunciation. This part of the test belongs to the spoken interaction. Moreover, at the end of the course students will do another speaking test in order to observe the changes that can emerge from the investigation in terms of communicative competence. Students should make an individual presentation instead of a dialogue in pairs. They have to talk in front of the class to introduce their partner from England (his/her daily routine, his/her hobbies, his/her family, etc). Besides, they will have to share their opinions of this experience, as well as the new things they have learnt in terms of their cultural and linguistic competences.

Secondly, the other instrument that we will use is related to the attitudes that students show about English as a Second Language. We will make one questionnaire at the beginning of the course in order to know the motivation students have about English, to know what kind of speaking activities they are accustomed to do, and their cultural awareness. After the online tandem study, we will make them the same questionnaire in order to know if this activity has helped them to improve their English and, especially their communicative competence, their motivation to learn English and their cultural awareness.

## **6. Procedure**

Data will be collected in two sessions during class time for all the groups. At the beginning of the tests, teacher will give clear instructions to students in Spanish in order to clarify any kind of doubt. The dialogues will be carried out in the first session. The teacher will record each pair of the students, while the rest of the students stay in the classroom listening to their partners. At the second session, they will have 15 minutes to do the attitude questionnaire. At the end of the project, teacher will use two sessions to carry out the different tests again. (Appendix IX and X).

The present study will last one course as we have already mentioned. For most of the tasks students will work together with their foreign partner in order to complete the activities provided by the teacher to practise the different topics.

The first term involves 40 hours of class and students will devote 10 hours to talk to their foreign partner through *Skype*. The first five units are related to school, daily routine, Bristol, sports and superstitions. Students should compare the differences and similarities between the way of life in their own country and in the foreign country. Moreover, they will have to develop the activities provided by the teacher, which help them to have a more fluent conversation.

The second term also involves 40 hours and students will dedicate 10 hours to talk to their foreign partner via *Skype*. The second five units are more related to cultural customs such as Easter, Carnival, Valentine's Day, etc. During their conversations they will have to compare the similarities and the differences between customs in their own country during these dates. They have to discuss

about these topics in order to be aware of the cultural differences and to be respectful with others.

During the third term students will have 30 hours of class and 15 hours will be devoted to do *Skype*. The last five units are distinct from the other units. The fact is that students have to make a project together with their foreign partner (one project per unit). The topics along these units are related with the five different continents and students are allowed to investigate in anything they are interested in, provided that the project is related to the continent. At the end of each unit students will have to make a presentation about their project in front of the class. Therefore, Spanish students will make their presentation in English and English students will make their presentation in Spanish.

Finally, it is essential to clarify that students will always receive feedback from the speaking tests made during this study by means of a rubric that will be included in the appendixes of this document. (Appendix XI).

## **7. Limitations**

Nevertheless, there are also certain limitations that affect to this project.

On the one hand, the time difference can cause some difficulties to schedule the sessions per week for both Spanish and English students. Furthermore, we have to select well the different topics that they are carrying out with this activity because these topics should be related to the units and to the curriculum. Besides, students are supposed to have an A1-A2 level but there is no official document that states that. Thus, as we will mention later we will use the descriptors established in the Common European Framework of Reference to declare the level they have. Another limitation could be related to school resources since it is required one computer and headphones per student.

On the other hand, we can also find difficulties in creating an email account that will be used in a public network since we are working with underage children and we have to take into consideration the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. Besides, we have to take also into account parents' opinion if we want to put into practice this project. We have to prevent in advance all of these troubles to protect the school institution and our job. Some of the tasks involved in the project consist of record students for educational purpose. Hence, we

have to ask parents for permission in order to develop this project. In order to do that, teacher will send a notification through *Clickedu*, which is an electronic platform of the school used to communicate with both parents and students. Then, parents should state if they agree or not with the project and depending on the answers the project will be viable or not.

Furthermore, another limitation is related with those students who repeat the course. In fact, it is not really a limitation but it is a question that we have to bear in mind to assign the Spanish students with the English students. The solution will be to have a different foreign partner each course and then, there would be no problem in order to carry out the project again. It is true that students who repeat the year will have to do the same activities again, but at least they can meet other people.

Hence, being aware of all these drawbacks in the implementation of this project, including the ones related to the Spanish curriculum, we will try to improve it making it more interesting and motivating for students.

## **8. Expected results**

Regarding our first research question, students are expected to have a high improvement in their communicative competence since their initial level is lower than the level they should reach when the project finishes. If students are close to A1 level at the beginning, now they should be in an A2 level. Therefore, they are expected to meet the skills and competences demanded by the Common European Framework of Reference. Moreover, if we compare the control group and the experimental group we will observe that the second one is now more confident to communicate in the foreign language and has a better pronunciation, fluency and intonation. Students have to talk about different cultural aspects, so they are reflecting on critical issues concerning their own country and the foreign country. Thus, they are expected not only to improve the oral skills, but also the ICC. Hence, this study is expected to help students learn better and longer about cultural and linguistic contexts.

Taking into consideration the attitudes questionnaires made at first and at the end of the course, we are expected to see how this activity has also helped to increase students' motivation in English. The use of interactive tools is usually

more interesting for teenagers. Moreover, the fact that they have to talk instead of only writing or reading is also accepted by learners. Besides, it is considered that topics related to cultural aspects are useful in order to arouse curiosity and at the same time enrich knowledge.

To sum up, we would like to state that the results expected for this project are quite positive and they are expected to satisfy our minimum expectations. Hence, we believe that this project is really useful for the improvement of the communicative competence as well as the intercultural competence and it should be implemented in the different schools. Moreover, we also believe that this activity helps students to be more confident and more open-minded people, as well as to have more autonomy in their own learning process.

## **9. Conclusion**

This study aims at providing students with a higher level in ICC of English L2, as well as enhancing their speaking skills trying to motivate them with interactive interaction among students of the foreign country. The main findings which stem from the present study state the importance of culture when someone is learning a foreign language.

With this aim in mind, we decided to establish a face-to-face conversation between Spanish students and English students through *Skype*. During the learning process, students have combined different tasks in order to acquire a high ICC level and an improvement in their oral skills. For instance, they have exchange information in order to compare the cultural differences and similarities between their own country and the foreign country. Besides, they have been provided with explicit instructions to carry out individual and collaborative tasks, which have help them to develop ICC.

Thus, we could state that telecollaboration tools, in this case *Skype*, are useful to help students to be aware of the cultural differences between people from other countries, as well as the learning of a foreign language. Moreover, it is expected that the creation of some projects together with their foreign partner help them to increase their knowledge in terms of their own culture and foreign culture, as well as to develop critical analysis by making comparisons and giving personal opinions.



Nevertheless, as we have mentioned before, this study has certain limitations that the teacher must face. For instance, it is essential to take into consideration the kind of resources that may have the school and the hindrances set by the current law. Moreover, sometimes it is very difficult to establish a regular assessment to evaluate the changes in students' perspectives or attitudes concerning English and its culture.

The expected results mentioned above lead us to believe that the contact with real-life experience is one of the best ways to learn foreign languages and to develop ICC. Moreover, this direct contact is also quite motivating for students who are more willing to work due to the fact that they have to face foreign speakers and they are supposed to understand each other. It is important to encourage students in order to develop those skills and abilities that let them communicate with people from different cultures. This study allows to conclude that our students require not only high level of L2, but also developing ICC in order to avoid misunderstandings with people culturally different in any context.

To conclude, it is crucial to highlight that further research can be carried out to determine how students can benefit more from these tools. Furthermore, it would be interesting relate this study to maturation, age and gender since depending on their L2 level and their willingness to work, they could be more or less confident when communicating.

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